THE REBEL,

AND

OTHER TALES, &c.

IN PROSE AND VERSE.

INCLUDING THE HITHERTO UNCOLLECTED WRITINGS

OF THE AUTHOR OF

"PELHAM," "THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII," &c.



NEW-YORK:
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ADVERTISEMENT.

In presenting this volume to the public, it is thought by the publishers that they ought, perhaps, to state very briefly the circumstances under which it is produced, and their motives for the undertaking. As to the first, it is sufficient to remark, that the pieces contained in it have appeared in England at various times in magazines, annuals, and pamphlets, and are now, for the first time, collected. A few of the latest have already been made known to American readers, having been copied into newspapers from the publications in which they originally appeared; but it is believed that the major part will be new in this country. It is but justice to the author to state, that several are the productions of his juvenile years, and were written more as trials of unascertained power, than as materials on which to found a critical judgment. The motives that have led to the publication are twofold; first, to enable purchasers to complete their editions of Mr. Bulwer's writings, which, it is thought, will be held desirable by the greater number of those who admire and enjoy his more elaborate and finished productions; and second, to furnish a means of ascertaining those which really are his, among the number of tales, essays, and other occasional pieces, that have been and still are ascribed to him, on no other evidence than that of supposed resemblance or identity in thought and language.

New-York, February, 1835.

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O'NEILL,

OR

THE REBEL.

Pandulph. So mak'st thou faith an enemy to faith;
And, like a civil war, set'st oath to oath.

Archduke. Rebellion, flat rebellion!

SHAKSPEARE.

PREFACE.

When this Poem was commenced, it was with the intention of taking for its Hero one whose singular and romantic fate is connected with an era eventful in the History of a Sister Country. This idea the Author subsequently resolved, from various motives, not to pursue; and perhaps the turbulent times alluded to, are too little removed from the present to make either the individual or the Conspiracy with which he was connected a legitimate subject for an Imaginative Work.

The Period of the Tale has therefore been left undetermined: the Hero derives from the penal disabilities to which his religion subjects him, the strongest excuse for his infringement of the laws; and the Author has endeavoured to draw from Fiction the interest he formerly intended to have borrowed from fact.

London, June 4, 1827.

DEDICATION.

To ****** ********.

In premising that I have laid in Ireland the scene of the following poem, I give at once the motive and excuse for inscribing my undertaking to you. Do not deceive yourself by imagining that, in so doing, I intend solely to convey a token of respect and admiration for a single individual. Pardon my want of gallantry in owning a desire to render this idle tribute a testimony of less exclusive devotion. In the singular fascination of your beauty, which knows neither an equal nor a fault—in the vivid and various graces of your mind, and in the higher qualities of your heart (that unceasing source of pure, and warm, and generous affections),—you have combined and blended the most prominent characteristics of your countrywomen; and, like those who looked upon the masterpiece of Apelles, I feel that I am yielding my offering of homage to the Beauties of a whole nation, by rendering it now to the concentrated perfection of ONE.

O'NEILL; OR, THE REBEL.

CANTO THE FIRST.

ARGUMENT OF THE FIRST CANTO.

Description of the Night. The Scene. Of the State of the Peasantry. Of the Rebellious Meetings, and Depredatory Incursions. Of their late suspension, and its possible cause. The general Gladness. The festival Rejoicings at Lord Ullin's. Description of his Daughter Ellen, and her Lover Desmond. The interruption of the Lovers. The news Desmond receives. The Farewell Meeting of the Lovers in the Garden, &c. Desmond's mysterious disappearance. The renewed Depredations of the Rebels. Marlow becomes a Suitor to Ellen. The Inscription on Ullin's Gate. Ullin's reasons for favouring Marlow's suit. Ellen's ultimate and extorted consent. The decay of her Health.



O'NEILL;

OR,

THE REBEL.

I.

The winds were hush'd—and not a cloud was driven
Along the fair face of the sleeping heaven;
On yonder vale the breathing sweets of June
Bask'd in the kisses of the maiden Moon:
And stillest Night—the beautiful—the bland—
Walked like a Spirit o'er the lovely land.
And ever, where the mellow starlight slept
On greenest banks, the wave its vigil kept,
Where flower and tree reflected seem'd to show
The home which woo'd the Water-nymph below.
Oh! from the *outward* scene that we could win
Some spell to sooth the restless world *within!*
Had we below what makes the bliss above,
The boon would be—not loveliness—but love;
And were we borne upon the Prophet's car
At once to Heaven, all mortal as we are,
Heaven would be Earth—our human hearts would fling
Gloom o'er the light and Winter o'er the Spring.

II.

Around that vale lies scattered many a shed,
Where Guilt blasphemes, and Hunger shrieks for bread;
Where the gaunt Serf untam'd, *because untaught,*
Sees pain in toil and hopelessness in thought:—

Gazing on ghastly Famine with dull eye
He sits, and drinks his children's bitter cry,
Till fierce Despair hath made the dreamer brave,
And *grasp'd* the pittance it was wont to *crave*.

III.

The want which links the Wretched to his kind,
Shakes all control save Nature's from the mind.
Wild from the laws whose mercy only gave,
Rest in the jail and shelter in the grave—
There met a rude, unarm'd, unmarshall'd band,
The scorn, but yet the scourges, of the land.
Still, when the midnight cloaked the heavy air,
Came those fierce sons of Darkness and Despair;
Sweet was to them the rapture of the strife
Where death had less of bitterness than life;
With naught to peril, and with all to win,
And deeming Faith found pardon for their sin,
Bound in one cause, cemented by one oath,
They grew in guilt, and gloried in the growth.
Drunk with the wrath of Slaves but newly free,
They rais'd the arm where once they bent the knee,
Where writh'd the Worm, the Serpent rear'd its head,
And Vengeance trampled where Submission bled.

IV.

Such was the Band that, where the happy gale
Breath'd o'er the flowers that gemm'd the glowing vale,
Where old Tradition filled each haunted glade
Thro' which sweet waves their moon-lov'd music made—
Such was the Band, that there dark orgies kept,
From which to havoc like a storm they swept;
Mocking the Justice which in vain pursued,
Or vaguely threaten'd what it ne'er subdued.
If vain the sword, still vainer was the bribe
To bare the haunts of that unhallow'd tribe;

Though for the Chief, whose bolder sin had won
The rule the many ever yield to one,
Though for that Chieftain's doom was pledged a meed
Might buy betrayal of a purer creed,
Yet Treachery fled from caves to courts, and time
Increased his safety while it swell'd his crime.

V.

But lately hush'd to rest—some secret cause
Had given to guilt a momentary pause—
Awhile the fearful Satellites of Law
Grew fierce at feasts, and laughed away their awe;
Awhile the wealthy tranquilly forgot
The serpent couch'd beneath their flowery lot;
The English lord, secure at bed and board,
Caroused and slept—as fits an English lord;
No more the maiden mark'd, with boding breast,
Eve's earliest lamp—the love-star of the west:—
But rather hail'd, with no unwelcome thrill,
The shade and stillness deepening o'er the hill,
Stole with soft footstep to the quiet glade,
Nor feared to meet a ruffian in the shade.

VI.

Whate'er this late suspense of Crime had wrought,
In vain Conjecture had the secret sought.
Meanwhile, through those fam'd halls where we respect
The chosen Sages we do *not* elect,
Where reverend Justice fondly we behold
Muttering strange saws—which pass'd for truths of old;
And framing—Fate's disparities to cure—
Laws for the rich, and game-laws for the poor;
Through that fam'd Senate fierce contention ran,
And gathering Até shook the sage Divan;
For those who now the emerald island sway'd,
Were pledged to heal the wounds their sires had made;

With eyes less blinded to the Past—they saw
How ill Oppression wore the garb of Law.
Perchance they thought permission might be given
For souls to choose less favoured roads to Heaven;
Perchance they thought the million should not bleed,
Because the thousand chose a holier creed.

And hence Hope shone like sunshine o'er the isle,
And Wo's wan aspect wore an alien smile,
And aye as each succeeding rumour grew,
Conjecture gladdened to a happier hue.
Light was each heart, exulting was each voice,
And he who met his neighbour said, "Rejoice!"
Hence too perchance—if guess might aught supply
The truth which shunn'd inquiry's curious eye—
Hence too perchance the Midnight mark'd no more
The blood-stain'd hearth and violated door:—
For 't is but Wo which drinks a fierce delight,
From those dark deeds which ask the secret night;
Guilt lends excitement to the lost alone,
And Hope befriends no guile—*except her own.*
If they who most endure the most will dare,
If crime's worst source be seated in despair,
Yet oh! when golden Happiness is by,
Like baffled fiends the stormier passions fly;
O'er earth the softness of the Heaven will fall,
And Love look down to brighten over all.

VII.

From hut to hall the general gladness flew,
And laughing Revel waked her wassail crew;
E'en now from yonder domes the latticed light,
Streams far and frequent o'er the startled night,
And all which birth holds high, or beauty fair,
Have met to hail that bright'ning era there.
Proud of his country's hospitable boast,
Gay speeds the mirth where Ullin is the host.

Age from the goblet draws the angel-wing
Which wafts it back to youth's unclouded spring,
And Youth's gay heart bounds eager to the dance,
Light as its step and careless as its glance;
While blandest Music with its silver voice,
Bids thought be mute, or lures it to rejoice.

Betroth'd to one long worshipp'd and enshrined
In the veiled altars of that vestal mind,
Dreaming of years unreck'd, and fate defied,
With one dear treasure ever by her side—
Pure—gentle—tender as the evening air,
When something holy blends with Beauty there—
While vague and voiceless through the light above,
Moves the impassioned spirit of deep love,
Lord Ullin's daughter sat!—and in her ear
Came those low tones which maidens deem most dear,
And o'er her young cheek's softest beauty stole
And went, the blushes speeding from the soul—
And oft from earth, all guilelessly she raised
The eye e'en Love had ne'er too wildly praised—
The eye which woo'd you like a star to gaze,
And dream that worlds lay couch'd beneath its rays;
And *as* you gazed your soft'ning spirit drew
As from some holy fount *a virtue* from its hue.

What though stern fate which rarely scathes the young,
Had o'er her path no lightest sorrow flung;
Yet that soft heart from childhood's earliest years,
Had looked *abroad* and found the source of tears;
The ravaged country and the cheerless shed,
Want's breadless board and Death's despairing bed—
These had she known,—for she had balm for grief,
And taught e'en Guilt the rapture of belief.
And as through caves the sunbeam finds its way,
And pours o'er gloom the glory of the day;
So to those secret sufferings of the poor,
Which Wealth and Pride so rarely stoop to cure—

She came, and Anguish, of its shade beguiled,
Caught the bright influence of her soul, and—smiled.

VIII.

Such scenes had temper'd with a pensive grace
The maiden lustre of that faultless face,
Had hung a sad and dream-like spell upon
The gliding music of her silver tone;
And shaded the soft soul which loved to lie
In the deep pathos of that volum'd eye.
Lone—thoughtful—tender—ever, from her birth,
Her heart had been too gentle for light mirth.
Such are the thrones where Love too surely reigns,
And turns his slightest chaplets into chains:
To them the World of others is as naught;
They shrink from earth, and banquet on sweet thought—
And Passion grows their life; alas, for those
Whom Rapture leaves too restless for repose,—
Who bind on reeds their hopes—their joys—their all,
And idly chide the wild winds when they fall.

Oh, happier far the wandering hearts which range
From flower to flower with sweets in every change,
Than they who link their very selves to one,
Watch—hope—adore!—despair—and are undone!

IX.

And *she did* love—and he she loved was by—
And her cheek flush'd to his impassion'd eye;
And many an envious tone and jealous glance
Went round—but broke not their unheeding trance.
'T was said her lover had, till Faith had seen,
A holier shrine, Love's wandering Pilgrim been—
That his the truant faith, the broken vow,
The laws man made, in man alone allow.

But little knew that curious crowd, in truth,
The earlier annals of his restless youth.
Born the last scion of a race whose sway
Had ruled the Green Isle in her olden day;
Rear'd 'mid the falling tower and mould'ring arch,
Which years had spared to chronicle their march,
And treasuring each lone relic as the shrine
Which held the memory of his royal line,
From earliest childhood fatherless and lone,
To good or ill Lord Desmond's youth had grown,
And with each passion of his fiery blood
Without one check to curb or guide the flood—
He pass'd a wanderer o'er that land which seems
No feign'd Elysium to our boyish dreams:
And dreams had fed *his* boyhood—he had trod
Where Bards and Warriors slept beneath the sod:—
Had heard the low winds murmur on the steep
When midnight rested on the sullen deep,
And strange sounds floated from the gloomy caves,
And dim and fitful forms along the waves,
Borne on the brooding wings of Darkness, roll'd—
The Spirits of the wizard sons of old,
Who from th' unsolid air and wandering cloud
Call'd Shapes and Shadows to their bidding, bow'd.
For whom the Night held secrets, and her drear
Recess a vision, and a voice of fear—
And the rent earth restored her dead, and gave
From fleshless lips revealings of the Grave—
What time *the living slept*, and from her noon,
On the lone mountain look'd the mystic Moon,
And trembled—to her tented cloud retreating,
With the deep awe of that unearthly meeting.

His Fathers were the Monarchs of that day
When rung yon hills to Ossian's lofty lay,
Ere yet the Norman bandits who proclaim
Their olden line had bought their sons a name.

And thoughts of fame which should recall his sires
Came to his heart and fann'd themselves to fires,
With hopes of holier honours unallied
To selfish power or solitary pride—
Of years—ambition—labour—life employ'd
To raise the land oppression had destroy'd,
Bid faction rest, intestine discord cease,
And sooth e'en hostile priestcrafts into peace.
Such were his hopes—but he was doom'd to mark
Their gradual fading till his soul grew dark;
For he was born to that false faith the true
Should meekly crush, and piously subdue:
And doomed to suffer, though forbid to groan,
Youth's just ambition blighted and o'erthrown,
Fettered and fated—ask ye if he burn'd
With loyal love when hopelessly he turn'd
To bear and bury in an alien state
The Exile's restlessness—the Bondsman's hate?

X.

Years past—methinks there is a time for all
Which the weak spirit gladly would recall:
The Epoch of our years which mars or makes,
And sheds o'er life the colours which it takes;
Slight in its seeming—oft by all unseen
Save him who feels too deeply it has been—
And marks its influence spread o'er all below
As points his path to happiness or wo;
Our fate lies then before us, and the soul
Goes darkly forward to its destin'd goal—
Our choice, but naught beyond, is in our power,
Eternity may rest upon an hour:
And on we speed, ere yet that hour be flown,
To fame—disgrace—the scaffold—or the throne.
On—on through death—to *what* beyond the tomb?
Oh! where shall end the darkness of our doom?

XI.

Years past—the wanderer had return'd again,
And Gladness met him in his old domain.
Sweet to the man the greeting and the joy,
Which prove how fresh the memory of the boy;
And hearts too cold to share that welcome zeal,
Will feign a rapture which they may not feel.
Lov'd by the low, and honour'd by the proud,
He stood no Lara in the living crowd;
Smooth was his brow, and joyous was his glance,
And light his footstep in the linked dance;
His voice, the blithest at the festive hour,
Had still the sweetest tones for lady's bower;
And his the unfrequent air which few withstand,
That blends so well the brilliant and the bland;
The nameless magic sparkling over all,
Like fairy spells unfelt by those they thrall.
The pride so veil'd that it was only seen
In the high carriage and the lordly mien;
The words, where wit, the while it beam'd, refined,
To all so courteous, to the few so kind:—
Such were the arts with which the crowd he sway'd,
And chain'd and charm'd the captives which he made.

XII.

Not rude the form where youth began to assume
The tints of man, and darken from its bloom;
His the slight frame the Grecian loved to trace,
Where strength sat light and soften'd into grace;
The chisell'd features, and the forehead where
O'er the broad temples wreath'd the glossy hair;
The eye which said so eloquently well
Whate'er the lip, less dangerous, fail'd to tell;
Albeit at times some veil'd remembrance came
To damp its ray, or rouse it into flame.

But, calm or careless in his general air,
Thought seem'd unfrequent, and emotion rare,
Though wont the sacred faith once held so dear
Revil'd—belied—and oft blasphemed to hear,
Though the lost land his Fathers had possess'd,
Like all things wretched, bore the vulgar jest;
Yet rarely Passion flush'd his brow, or wrung
Scorn from his glance or insult from his tongue;
And they who knew his boyhood, wondering deem'd
His soul had grown as callous as it seemed.

Perchance they err'd not!—with each year's decay
Fades leaf by leaf the Heart's young bloom away-
The thoughts most cherish'd darken from the breast,
And Virtue grows less beautiful;—we rest
Not on ourselves but others—and we shroud
The lofty thoughts too sacred for the crowd,
And bend to their low level—till the long
And gathering custom knits us with the throng.
Passion—nor Feeling—nor the purer springs
Which move Mankind to warm imaginings,
Have aught in common with the World: we grow
Too cold for rapture—too obtuse for wo;
And still as years come o'er us, vainer seem
Love's boyish hope and Manhood's patriot dream;
And still each day the spirit turns the more
From thoughts and ties itself had sought before,
Till to all other interest callous grown,
It shrinks, and cramps, and grapples to its own.

XIII.

Whate'er the whisper'd frailties of his youth,
The changeful passion, or the broken truth;
Whate'er his failings or his follies past,
Well had Lord Desmond fix'd his faith at last.
And oh, if ever love did truly speak
In the fond gaze, the ever-varying cheek,

The faltering accent, and the flushing brow,
At least his homage will not waver *now*.

XIV.

Whose yon dark eye upon the lovers bent,
Whose yon keen look so lowering and intent;
Whose yon stern form with rugged garb and air,
Which suit so ill the courtly revel there?
Lightly he mark'd the whisper of amaze,
The gathering gazers, and the haughty gaze;
But just observed within that mirthful hall,
He stood, though noticed, yet unknown by all.
Slowly he strode to Desmond—fix'd his view,
Then paused, and made his rude salute—and drew
A letter from his bosom: Desmond's look
Wax'd pale and eager as the scroll he took.
As o'er the words he bent him, you might mark
The wrung lip quiver, and the brow grow dark;
And when he raised his looks again—an air
So sad, so sunken from their pride, was there;
You might have deem'd that every word had grown
A spell to freeze all feeling into stone.

He rose at last, and silently drew near,
Where Ullin stood—and whisper'd in his ear,
"From Cromla news that ere the dawning hour
Come guests from England to my neighbouring tower;
And I must hence—my favourite steed will bear
Myself to Cromla, ere the sun be there.
Nor Ullin, thou who act'st so well the host,
Canst urge my absence from the self-same post.
But hear!—our hopes, our country's fond belief,
The hugg'd and plighted promise of relief,
The meteor beam we deem'd a star is o'er—
And Erin's night is rayless as before!"

XV.

He turn'd—nor paused the aged Chief's reply,—
He turn'd, and met his Ellen's tearful eye,
Which fix'd and following on his footsteps sought
The answering gaze it shrunk from when it caught.
He pass'd the spot she hallow'd—paused to tell
The bitter tidings and the brief farewell:
And when he mark'd the quivering lip—the sigh—
And the quick tear which dimm'd the downcast eye,
He murmur'd hopes of parting more unseen,
And named with whisper'd voice the trysting-scene;
Then turn'd—and with him sullenly along
Went that rude stranger through the curious throng,
Addressing—answering—heeding none, he pass'd
Through yon dark door which veil'd his form at last.

XVI.

She listen'd not;—she *felt* his steps depart—
Then rose and follow'd with a beating heart:
She pass'd the hall—the gate—the garden—where
Cool on her burning temples came the air.
The banks were steep'd in moonlight; the sweet flowers
Breathed with the first kiss of the morning hours,
And far and faintly you might hear the voice
Of the wild brooks along the vale rejoice;
But Nature's smiles are only for the blest,
And Fear sat heavy on her boding breast.
And on she went—nor saw nor reck'd of aught,
Save the hot pressure of one fev'rish thought—
As they who walk in noonday's fullest beam,
Girt with the shadow of a troubled dream.

XVII.

Beside a shatter'd oak Lord Desmond leant,
Still as a shape of stone—the brow (which bent

Along the deep and dreaming eye that fed
Its gaze on Heaven)—was hueless as the dead.
She laid her hand upon his arm; and yearn'd
To kiss the lip which trembled as it turn'd.
"My own sweet Ellen, this is kind—and yet
For once my spirit meets thee with regret.
To meet—see—but to leave thee, wrings my heart."
"Alas! my Desmond, wherefore should we part?—
Thy friends await thee?—well, if thou wilt roam,
When comes again my wanderer to his home?
Nay!—look not thus: when oft before as now,
Farewell was blent with Faith's consoling vow,
Thine was the voice of comfort—thine the dear
And bright'ning looks which smiled away my fear—
And oh!—when thou had'st left me, and when all
Seem'd dark—those words, those looks I would recall—
Shed o'er each doubt their treasured thoughts, and see
The hope thou left'st me, light each dream of thee.
Oh, if we part so sadly—Desmond, say
What beam shall bless me from thine eyes away?
Where shall I turn when thou art gone, and naught
But grief unmingled haunts each bitter thought?—
Look on me, Desmond!—surely there is more
In this farewell than parting knew before;—
Speak—answer—give me one dear smile to show
These are but woman's tears, and vainly flow,
Thou turn'st not—yes—too well forebodes my heart—
And thou—"
"Forgive me, dearest as thou art!
My baffled hopes—my Erin's deep despair,
Thy strength'ning love shall teach my soul to bear.
Oh! rather would I ask my heart to glow,
And woo wild mirth amid my country's wo,
Smile, though all round me shame such joy, than see
A Patriot's anguish wring one tear from thee.
But since our passion, never did I part
With such a deep foreboding at my heart.
Look up and hear me!"

From his breast she raised
Her weeping eyes, and on his features gazed:
The pale and ghastly moon shone coldly o'er
The hush'd yet haughty sorrow which they wore—
From the wan marble of his brow, the air
All faintly stirr'd the long dishevell'd hair—
The parted lip was hueless—and the eye
Unmoving dwelt upon the quiet sky.

Oft in the looks of Wo's o'ercharg'd excess,
The reigning passion *seems* most passionless,
As if our grief grew tranquil at the thought
That all which tortures was *already* wrought,
As if the spirit rising from the load
Which crush'd till then—look'd forth from its abode,
And o'er the pangs and passions of the Earth
Shed the deep calm of its immortal birth.
And as the pale and trembling maiden eyed
That form and mien so mournful in their pride—
And mutely gazed, she felt her blood grow chill
Before that air so desolate and still.

XVIII.

"I am not wholly what the world may deem—
For I can mask my brow in smiles, and seem
Blent with the herd around me!—Who can mount
Where eagles hold their unseen nest? or count
The winged and aspiring thoughts which rest
Within the clouds and darkness of the breast?
But I have knit my spirit to a doom
Which hath no certain limits—and the gloom
Knows but a single Star—*thy love!*—where'er
I walk, the Earth is girded with a snare;
And in the revel there goes forth a voice,
Which whispers fear, and dares me to rejoice;
Ev'n in the silent night, when men escape
From human thought, there is a Demon shape—

And in the winds there is a Spirit's breath,
Freighting the free and happy air with Death.
But I can feed on poisons--and my soul
Walks lone but dauntless onwards to its goal.
They who, like me, have set upon a die
A nobler fate than theirs—their own defy;
And while each hope and blessing round them fall,
Clasp to their hearts a recompense for all.

But this is vain!—if in this changeful scene
We meet no more; if all that once hath been
Between our souls is sever'd—and our lot
Mourns for a broken charm and finds it not;
Then still through change, time, distance, fate, as now,
My heart will echo to our parting vow.
Though sin pollute what yet is left of pure,
And the soul darken while the life endure;
Though foes surround me—though condemned to learn
How friendship falters, and how truth can turn,
Fate the last seal of suffering cannot set,
For *thy* remembrance shall be left me yet!
My soul, at each new evil years have wrought,
Shall shrink within and rivet round thy thought;
Nor feel whate'er the winds and storms have reft,
While on the stem one green leaf shall be left.
And this, thine earliest gift—which I have press'd
Here, till it almost grew unto my breast—
When this, all broken, shall to thee return,
Then—nor till then—my last doom thou shalt learn.
Then will my memory with my life be past,
And this wild heart forget to love at last!"

XIX.

He turn'd—he ceased—and in that strain'd embrace
What years were crowded in an instant's space!
In the deep passion of that mournful mood,
What hopes—fears—feelings—mingled, yet subdued!

Chill came the morning on their brows, and threw
O'er their blent locks the dampness of its dew—
And the weak waning moon stood sad and still
As when she linger'd o'er the Latmos hill.
They were so young—so beautiful in youth!
And in their love was such a world of truth!
Alas! that such should meet, or meeting part!
Or—that we know no Lethé for the heart!

* * * * *
* * * * *

XX.

Days faded, but *he* came not;—and the sun
Brought that at last which was their bridal one—
That which had long been mark'd for joy; but now
Where are the garlands for that maiden brow?
Where are the song, the revel, and the lute,
Music and mirth, O wherefore are ye mute?
None—since that night of fatal merriment,
When forth from Ullin's halls Lord Desmond went—
None had beheld him: round his ancient gate
Still with fond gaze his anxious clansmen wait.
Still does Inquiry vainly strive to draw
Some trace to aid the baffled steps of law;
But bootless all; and every idle guess
But made the semblance to the truth seem less.
Meanwhile, months pass'd in unrelax'd alarms,
Men dream'd of blood, and grasp'd in sleep their arms:
For that wild band, which slept until was o'er
The hope which gleam'd on Erin, waked once more.
Far o'er the waste, when night was at her noon,
Burst the red flames which mock'd the placid moon,
And rose the shriek of those who woke to feel
The murderer's gripe, and wrestle with his steel.

XXI.

But still the Lost return'd not: feeble grew
All hope and question e'en amid the few:
The courtly Marlow woo'd his destined bride,
With name less noble but with lands more wide;
And Ullin, looking through the vale of years,
Beheld meet matter for a Father's fears;
Himself at rest within that sullen grave,
Where thought can aid not nor affection save;
And she, his lone and loveliest flow'ret, reft
Of all which shelter'd, to the bleak winds left.
With this, perchance, a secret fear combined,
Unown'd, yet all unconquer'd by his mind.
The Warder's gun some daring hand had braved,
And thrice upon his gate these words engraved:
"*Think well, Lord Ullin, ere thy daughter's hand*
Be pledged to Marlow in the marriage band:
To him—to any, if such boon be given,
That very hour the unhallow'd link is riven—
That very hour a voice the mirth shall mar,
That very hour a hand the deed shall bar,
That very hour for ever lost shall be
His bride to Marlow, and thy child to thee;
For if to man she ever be allied,
We claim thy Daughter for our Chieftain's bride."

XXII.

Idle and vain these words in truth appear'd,
And Reason scorn'd them; but Affection fear'd;
And o'er the Father, as his health decay'd,
Each anxious doubt a deeper influence made.
He seem'd to mock the empty vaunt, and yet,
He fain had seen how idle was the threat,
And died—rejoicing Fate at least would fall
On one protected in a husband's hall.

Such were the feelings which as time went by,
For Marlow's suit won favour in his eye;
And well he urged, through love itself severe,
That hateful cause on Ellen's shrinking ear.

XXIII.

Who hath not felt that tyranny of mind,
Which chafes if rugged, but subdues if kind;
Slow but secure—which arms our inmost strength,
Yet wrings its purpose from the soul at length!
For who can aye resist, when those who press
Are all we wish in this wide world to bless?
Words may be met, but how canst thou reply
To the mute lip and all-imploring eye?
How aye resist the tenderness of tone,
Which veils that wish to very custom grown,
Which drops so faintly, yet with every day,
Must wear *some* marble from the heart away?
Or who can mark the never-chiding grief
Refusal gives—yet aye deny relief?
Who can?—not thine—though faithful passion still
Clasp'd thy young heart—not thine so stern a will!
Sweet Ellen, no!—though doubly blank and drear,
Consent might make this barren world appear;
Though Hope long cherish'd—for it feeds on air—
At such espousals wither'd to despair;
Though dead to earth and rooted to the past,
Her soul resisted long—it sunk at last;
And strove to sooth remembrance into rest,
By one pure hope to see a father blest.
But day by day more feeble wax'd her frame,
And o'er her cheek the changeful hectic came;
And though she strove beneath her father's eye
To smile—the effort saddened to a sigh;
And lone she sat long hours, and gazed at naught,
Tracing past dreams and nursing fev'rish thought;

And when she rose all lifelessly she went,
Gone the light step that scarce the wild flower bent.
And sleep stole rarely to her couch,—or gave
Wild shapes of terror—visions of the grave.
And sickness, weakness, death came o'er the breast
Which hail'd their omens, for they spake of rest.
And tho' she claim'd, when those new rites were named,
A longer date—she blush'd not as she claim'd.
She felt no maiden-shame nor woman-fear,
Nor heard the comfort whisper'd in her ear.
Alas! her only reason was the thought
From which the food of bitter Hope was wrought,
That the same feelings which in slow decay
Prey'd at her heart and wither'd life away,
Would guard the vows still link'd around the past,
And keep her soul all faithful to the last.

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.

O'NEILL; OR, THE REBEL.

CANTO THE SECOND.

ARGUMENT OF THE SECOND CANTO.

Twilight. The Ruined Tower. Introduction of the Stranger—who enters the Tower. Description of the Interior. The secret Passages. The Meeting-place of the Rebels. O'Neill's Speech. Description of the effect it produces, &c. The Chieftain's Chamber. His conference with Norman. Sketch of O'Neill—of the causes which led to his present Criminality, &c. Description of the Night, and Scene from the Casement of his Chamber. The comparison of the Soul to the element of Fire. The Rebel's Recollections, &c. The sound at the Casement. The Apparition.

O'NEILL; OR, THE REBEL.

I.

Eve darken'd slowly;—on the moor, which far
Spread bleak and barren, look'd the twilight star,
Mouldering and gray—no tree or flow'ret near
To make decay and loneliness less drear—
Amid the wrecks of its departed power
Frown'd o'er the waste one solitary tower;
O'er the worn portals hung the livid dew,
And there the dank moss desolately grew;
Column and stone spread widely o'er the sod,
Foul with the damps, and trembling where you trod;
Through the rent wall, and Gothic casement riven,
Shone coldly forth the melancholy Heaven,
And that lone star so clear and chilling made
The light itself more cheerless than the shade.
All was so still, so saddening, that an awe
Crept to the heart—you shiver'd as you saw,
And felt the breathing desolation freeze
The balm and blandness of the evening breeze.

II.

A step—a form—you would have turn'd, I ween,
To greet aught living in so lone a scene;
But yonder form which stole so darkly by,
With that swift step which fell so silently,
So well accorded with the landscape near,
Your pulse had quicken'd with a wilder fear;

That fear which sometimes in the midnight awes
The shuddering soul *without a human cause*,
When we have sprung from sleep!—to listen—start—
And only catch the beating of our heart—
That strange unfathom'd feeling which would seem
As if the spirit, wandering in its dream
Through graves and charnels, or the depths below,
Had met and grappled with some demon foe,
And wild—bewilder'd—madd'ning at escape,
Rush'd back all trembling to its earthly shape.

III.

The stranger reach'd the tower, and gazed around
Keenly and long—and listen'd for a sound,
With that strain'd tension of the eye and ear,
Which speaks of mystery hid, or danger near.
All seem'd secure: and with unechoing tread
He pass'd the porch; along the hall he sped,
Strode through the desert chambers where the rent
And mouldering floor beneath his footing bent—
And reach'd a room more desolate than all.
There couch'd the foul toad by the black'ning wall,
Turning on that strange guest his lurid eye,
And the wild bat swept ominously by,
Through the rent lattice, where the ivy stray'd,
And cast beneath a dim unsteady shade.
Dark hangings wrought with uncouth images
Bent down, and flutter'd in the fitful breeze,
Which from the roof above and galleries round
Came chill—and murmur'd with a moaning sound.
The angry tempests o'er the floor had thrown,
In many a wreck, the green time-tinted stone;
And that step, swift before, moved slow at last,
As o'er the rugged way with pain it pass'd.
Again the stranger gazed around; then where
The arras seem'd less shaken by the air,

Raised its rent folds, and press'd a secret screw.
Back at his touch the yawning wainscot flew,
And left a fearful opening, where the ray
Shot through—and glimmer'd in the gloomy way:
There damp and steep and narrowing as they go
More deep, rude steps wind serpent-like below;
And when the stranger entering closed the wall,
Darkness and Night fell round him like a pall.

Oft must his eye have sought the shade, I ween,
And oft his footstep echoed in that scene;
Safe through the gloom he trod, till through the damp,
Fitful and flickering, gleamed a lonely lamp.
There paused his feet—again a secret door
Flew back—then closed on darkness as before.
Again his path renew'd, till, towards the right,
Stream'd from a door half-closed the chequ'ring light:
His steps glide swift—the threshold floor they win,—
Dark was the group and wild the scene within.

IV.

Gather'd around a massive table, yet
With the feast's relics strew'd, fierce forms were met
(Such as Salvator drew—a rugged horde);
Bowls large and frequent strew'd th' unhallowed board,
Mix'd with rude weapons which, unsheath'd, declare
How link'd with danger the carousal there.

But when the door flew open—and the mien
Of that tall stranger broke upon the scene,
As, flinging back his mantle, he unveil'd
The form and face in which their Chief they hail'd;
Up sprang the whole array; a sudden shout
Of joyous welcome rang confus'dly out;
And, driv'n and flickering, at that rushing stream
Of sound—grew pale the lone lamp's ghastly beam.

To where a seat with gaudier trappings gracer
At the far end of that rude board was placed,
He strode—then paused, while hush'd and heavy fell
On all deep silence like a sudden spell;
And each his seat as by an instinct took,
And fix'd upon the Chief his glowing look.

One minute,s stillness—that brief burning pause
Which keener strains the senses which it awes;
Then spoke the Chieftain, and his voice instill'd
The thoughts it breathed into the hearts it thrill'd.
He spoke of Erin's fate so wrapp'd in shade,
That night whose stars were meteors which betray'd.
He spoke of rule which through the waste of years
Had traced its laws in terror and in tears,
And then, with bright'ning eye and deep'ning tone,
Of that false hope which had so *lately* shone,
Bade them recall that ever while it lured,
They hush'd their groans and famish'd—but endured,
Till Treachery, darkening o'er that hope it nurs'd,
Made their last state seem gloomier than the first.

Still as his words more ardently rung forth,
His list'ners kindled to an equal wrath;
And there with eyes that flash'd and brows that bent,
Keen—burning—breathless o'er the board they leant.

V.

Though stern yet thrilling was that eloquence,
Which seized the passions to beguile the sense;
And the fierce features of the speaker caught
Light from his words, and kindled with his thought.

"Yes, by your famish'd babes ye sat and saw
Death at your hearth—but did ye break the law?
Yes, ye beheld the riches which would spare
Not one poor mite to save you from despair.

And left them scathless, and but idly curs'd
The cankering shackles which ye once had burst;
Yes, ye beheld the English stranger seize
Its last most wretched pallet from Disease;
Tear from your very sires, with brutal strength,
The bed where Suffering look'd for rest at length;
Heard the faint groan, and mark'd the stiffening clasp,
Nor raised one hand against the ruffian grasp.
Yes! though long wont as now by sword and strife
To buy that vengeance link'd in truth with life—
Yet have ye sat for months, and tamely borne
The wrongs ye scorn'd—the want ye could not scorn.
Dark was the present—darker was the past,
But light seem'd coming—and ye hoped at last.
Ye sat, ye murmur'd not, ye look'd afar,
Saw—hail'd—adored that glimmering as the star
Which shone on Bethlem, and ye dream'd to find
Good-will to earth and mercy to mankind.
Had we then lost remembrance?—did we dare
To hope that *aught* could make Oppression spare?
Hope from that Land which had from eldest time
Link'd wrong with insult, faithlessness with crime;
Hope from her boasted liberty to gain
Ease from her yoke—and respite from her chain;
Right from her laws, or from her justice ruth—
Was ours such fancy?—*We deserved the truth!*"

VI.

"Well! we have known our wrongs at her behest
Tried—doubted—mock'd. Ay! all things but *redress'd;*
Known the same charge renew'd, though still o'erthrown,
And aye by conquest more unconquer'd grown;
Th' ignorant babbling of that brainless race,
Bred in the stall, enlighten'd at the chase;
The meek petitions of assembled priests,
Mild as their bowls, and sparing as their feasts;

The bolster'd tale, the gravely-quoted lie,
The sneers at Truth, the cheers at Calumny—
These have we known: they trick'd our woes in state,
That Slaves might scoff, and Orators debate;
That Lords might learn how Christian love attunes
The gentle souls of Senator-dragoons;
That meek-lipp'd Saints might mouth the blessed theme,
And mitred Casuists triumph and—blaspheme."

"*This* was your fate—so sunk all hope and fear;
Ye saw—ye felt—ye answer'd—ye are here!
Just was our vengeance—we have swept, 't is true,
Death on our foes—but they were Erin's too.
The English Tyrant, and his savage Slave,
Th' extorting Minion, and the legal Knave,
The stern who starve, the gentle who betray,
Do ye repent?—these—*these* have been your prey!
Wo to the fools whose wisdom is to heap
Wrongs, yet repose—and tyrannies, yet sleep!
Theirs is the couch of thorns, the chamber theirs
Where Murder hides—and Vengeance veils her snares.
Yea, by the hoarded hate—the hidden sword—
The curse which rests not—have they their reward!

VII.

"This night, Avengers, brings th' accustom'd hour,
To pledge anew the oath which knits our power;
And ne'er before with fiercer zeal than now,
I call'd and bound ye by that awful vow.
By the dread memory of your wrongs—your fanes
Despoil'd and trampled; by your chiefs in chains,
Yourselves in Want's worst agony—your race
A wand'ring tribe of Hunger and Disgrace;
By the stern laws which have for *you* no hope,
Save their last gift—the gibbet and the rope;
By this bowl brimming with one tyrant's blood,
And this right hand—made sacred by that flood;

By the high purpose which convenes you now,
By every grappled blade and darkening brow,
Arise!—I pledge you in the AVENGER's vow.

VIII.

The Rebel ceased: before his flashing eye
Uprose that savage band with one wild cry,
Each with his right hand raised—as swiftly round
Went the red cup which that carousal crown'd.
Up to the echoing vault of that grim cell
Rung the dark oath no pious lip may tell;
Words of more fearful import ne'er went forth
In the hag-haunted caverns of the North,
When the Norwegian witches held their screen'd
And sinful orgies with the Master Fiend,
While the harsh winds, and Night's ill-omen'd birds,
Scream'd their shrill echo to the guilty words!
Over that band the lamp look'd dim and lone,
And made more fierce the forms on which it shone
As Passion lent to each its varying mark,
Blanching the cheek and livid lip—or dark
And gathering o'er the brow, beneath whose shroud
Flash'd the red eye like lightning from its cloud.
Dread scene!—that chamber where the vapours damp
Clung to the walls and struggled with the lamp:
The board o'erspread with arms—the rugged men,
Whose wild dark forms seemed kindred to the den;
And that fierce Leader, with his wreathing hair
Flung from the flushing cheek and temples bare,
With lip still breathing wrath, and glowing eye,
And right hand dabbled with a crimson dye.
Scarce less unearthly, in the solitude
Where o'er their courts the Forest Demons brood,
And the stars, paled by spells, all faintly shine
O'er the swift waters of the rushing Rhine,—
Seem the dim shapes beheld by fires that throw
O'er the tall pines a red and swarthy glow,

XI.

And this was then that Chief, whose name of dread
Had pass'd into a proverb, who had fed
The tongue of Fear with legends vague and wild,
As aught which e'er our boyhood's ear beguiled.
Round the yule-hearth no gossip Seer hath told
More wondrous tales of stalwart knight of old,
Than those which blanch the lips that would reveal
The deeds and darings of the rude O'Neill.
Fit chief, in truth, for such confederates; cold
In plot and purpose as in action bold;
A very Proteus in his powers, endued
With spells which enter'd in the subtlest mood;—
'T was not the hand so much as heart he gain'd,
He won to wield, and while he pleased he chain'd.

XII.

In form as manner varying—versed in all
Which strengthens crime, or veils it, if it fall;
A thousand shapes and tones his practised skill
Could seize at pleasure and reject at will.
His favourite haunts were not the cave and cell,
Where Darkness broods and Guilt is wont to dwell,
When most against him was the clamour loud,
He pass'd in safety through the City's crowd;—
When outraged Justice most he had defied,
He sat all scathless by her sworded side;—
The deep disguise, foes, friends alike deceived,
Revenge was blinded and Distrust believed:
Perchance such arts might, in a happier clime,
Have guarded Glory—*here* they sheltered Crime.

XIII.

Amid his followers—rugged as they seem'd—
Mix'd those of whom conjecture never dream'd;

Some to whom lineage (barr'd its rights) but lent
A juster plea to deepen discontent;
And some whom vex'd Ambition, which the laws
Denied all effort in a holier cause,
Lured to those secret schemes—for they who nurse
Ambition's hope are goaded by a curse
Which "*murders sleep!*"—or if to good or ill
The curse excites them onward—onward still!—
Like the vain Titan, madly do they clasp
A cloud, yet deem a Goddess in their grasp,
And bear the Titan's bitter doom, in breasts
Link'd to the torturing wheel *which never rests.*
And oft and aye the green Atlantic bore
Well veil'd assistance from th' opposing shore,
That state in which the Argus of intrigue
Ne'er sleeps, nor scorns with England's foes to league
For oh! the holiest cause knows no ally,
Like that where Hatred forms the common tie.

XIV.

Where'er O'Neill's more early fate was cast,
Ill seem'd the present suited to the past.
In his deep eye a melancholy shade
Belied the mirth the lip so wildly made;
And o'er his brow unsleeping Memory set
A seal as sad, though haughtier than regret.
Still at the board more joyous than the rest,
The beam which lit ne'er thaw'd that frozen breast;
And in his mien there reign'd that lordly air,
Which aught but Birth so rarely learns to wear;
Yet to the low so artfully he bow'd
His manner glass'd the nature of the crowd,
Far from the tone which, insolently kind,
Revolts the soul it *plainly* seeks to bind,
Unseen—unfelt—*his* spells,—as if they wreathed
Their magic only in the air he breathed.

XV.

In truth he seem'd not of a mind which laid
Its hopes and honour in a traitor's trade.
Vex'd from his childhood with the restless aim
To wring from Fate the "nothing of a name;"
And year by year more fondly wed to all
The dreams which lure Ambition to its fall,
The dreams so welcome to the heart of youth,
Where fancy less seems fiction than the truth;
Which Age nor Grief can teach us to despise,
Those sole philosophers that make men wise;—
Perchance the aspiring hopes his fancy fed
To holier paths his daring steps had led—
Perchance, for in his wildest moments, still
Spake out a heart, though warp'd, too soft for ill—
Perchance his powers—if happier turn'd at first,
Had bless'd in sunshine what in storm they curs'd.
But on each ebb and current of his soul
A bar was set to baffle—*not control*—
For in the mind there is a ceaseless source
Which *will* have way, however checked the *course*,
And bann'd all outward let, the passions bear
Back to the heart to waste their vengeance there.

XVI.

Thrust by a creed on which an Alien's name
Was set—from aught which loftier birth might claim,
His was the curse which pride most keenly gnaws,
Doubt without proof—suspicion without cause;
A claim to trust rejected—not denied—
An honour questioned, and a faith belied.
Yet did he feed in silence on the thought,
Which was as poison to his soul, and wrought
Hope from each treacherous spring that year by year
Burst forth to leave the desert heart more drear.

And, as the sailor cast on unknown shores
With aching eyes the waste of waves explores,
And sees the faint far vessels gliding on,
And hails—and hopes—until the last is gone;
So with each pledge forgetful of the past,
He watch'd—rejoiced—believed—and *woke* at last
To find the rocks around him wide and dark,
And the wave widow'd of its latest bark.

XVII.

Where then the wonder, if at length he turn'd
And curs'd the falsehood which had lured and *spurn'd?*
Where is the wonder—if that eager, wild
Impassion'd heart, so baffled and beguiled,
Roused into war by feelings scathed and strong—
The stings of pride—the rankling sense of wrong—
With all which Nature in the meanest breast
Stirs up if both insulted and oppress'd—
Urged him to madness, till the ling'ring band
That bound the faith was sever'd by the brand;
Till loyal love *already* in distrust
Turn'd to revenge and deem'd its treason just?
While headlong zeal and party hate, which blind
Its clearest sense when once they touch the mind,
Bade him in guilt the shape of glory see,
And mock'd rebellion with the name of free.
Oh! while we censure, is there at our hearts
No warning voice at which our conscience starts?
Have *we* religion's holiest laws obey'd,
If aught which fetters has for faith been made;
Have *we* refused no present proof to cast
Perverted eyes upon the doubtful past?
Have *we* permitted naught of partial zeal
To feign the fear our judgment could not feel?
Have *we* for seven long ages of abuse,
Left wrath no plea—resistance no excuse?

Have *we*—but vainly in this idle song
Would Question task the insanity of wrong.
The dotard bigot gropes along his way,
And veils the eyes too weak to bear the day,
And deems the sunshine, lightning—yet would see
Storms in the calm air should it come more free.
Onward his blind soul creeps, and like the snail
Drags on, or shrinks to, its perpetual jail,
That dungeon of dark thoughts—in which it feeds,
The mingled monsters of a thousand creeds—
Blackening each truth to terror—nor would hear
An angel's voice in answer to its fear;
But mouth the more the same unvaried theme,
And hug the nothings of its ideot dream.
But once more to my tale.——
The nightbeam fell
O'er the lone inmate of that narrow cell,
And play'd upon his sullen brow, and threw
A seeming quiet o'er its pallid hue.
With changeful step he paced the floor, as one
Who strives his burning thoughts to sooth or shun,
And hopes the action from without may win
The fitful, feverish restlessness within.

XVIII.

The moonlight kiss'd his lattice; pausing there
He lean'd, and woo'd the freshness of the air;
He look'd above, and mark'd with listless eye,
The dim clouds sweeping o'er the solemn sky;
Swift, shadowy, wan, the Æther spirits' cars,
They veil'd and vanish'd from the changeless stars.
Beneath him lay the wrecks of other days,
Hush'd in the moon and hallow'd by its rays;
While o'er the melancholy ruins round
Waved the rank herbage with a rustling sound.
Beyond for miles, amid the faithless swamp,
The meteor Fairy lit his wandering lamp;

While mutter'd o'er the mountains stretch'd behind
The gathering anger of the giant wind.

He look'd in silence, striving to control
The thoughts of sadness darkening on his soul:
He turn'd, he sat beside his hearth, and view'd
The fitful fire, that friend of solitude;—
That strange and mystic spirit, where is shown,
Perchance some type or shadow of our own—
Our own internal agent, which requires
Like that from earth, the fuel for its fires;
Which pours its powers into the meanest things,—
Quickens the senseless block to which it clings—
Now low, now soaring, now but form'd to bless
With temper'd light, now blasting with excess,
Which warms, pervades, ennobles while it preys
On the dull substance which supplies its blaze,
And when that substance is consumed, oh! where
Speeds the wild spirit?—*Answer me, thou Air!*

XIX.

Still bent the Rebel o'er the hearth, and woo'd
Departed thoughts to haunt his lonely mood;
Thoughts of those happier days, ere golden youth
Gloom'd into man, or fancy into truth.
He felt—the lost, the harden'd still can feel!
Into his eyes unwonted softness steal,
And shamed and starting raised them;—on the board
Unsheath'd and shining lay his Father's sword.
Oh! dream'd his boyhood that that warrior brand
Would strike for rapine in a Rebel's hand?
Swiftly he turn'd—such thoughts he could not bear;
Away, away!—his mother's gift is there,
Time's warning witness modell'd to portray
Death's steeds—the hours which urge us to decay.
Alas! how *his* had wasted since the morn
When first that boon his youthful pride had borne,

When, as she yielded to his young request,
His mother drew her darling to her breast,
And smooth'd the light locks from his forehead fair,
Press'd the fond kiss, and breathed the anxious prayer,
Smiled at his joy, and check'd the boding sigh;
But when again she caught that daring eye
And parting step already train'd to court
Whate'er of peril mingled with his sport,
Hope, gladness, pride—all dark'ning into fears,
She caught, and clasp'd, and bathed him with her tears.

Oh! in our sterner manhood when no ray
Of earlier sunshine glimmers on our way,
When girt with sins and sorrows and the toil
Of cares which sear the bosom that they soil;
Oh! if there be in Retrospection's chain
One link which knits us with young dreams again,
One thought so sweet we scarcely dare to muse
On all the hoarded raptures it reviews,
Which seems each instant in its backward range
The heart to soften, and its ties to change;
And every spring, untouch'd for years, to move—
It is the memory of a Mother's love.
And thus, though lost, degraded, and undone,
Felt the dark spirit of that guilty son;
He lean'd his face upon his hands, and let
The past come o'er him in its full regret,
And through his fingers (guests unknown for years,
But oh! how welcome) ooz'd the burning tears;
And there he sat, nor struggled to repress
That warm and more than woman-tenderness.

XX.

What sound is there? he heard, nor turn'd him round.
Again—again—a low, deep, steady sound
Thrice at the casement which the builder's hand
Had rais'd so proudly o'er the level land,

That if aught *living* moved there—'t was the wing
That wafts on high the weird owl's wandering.
Slowly he turn'd, and felt one glance suffice
To chill the curdling life-blood into ice.
Hueless and motionless in that repose
The sleep that never breaks alone bestows,
With glassy eye that almost froze to stone,
So fix'd its look the horror of his own,
With livid lip *from which there came no breath*
Glared on his gaze the lineaments of Death.
The form was robed as risen from the grave,
Save the long locks the breezes *did not* wave:—
Wildly they fell—but not a single hair
Stirr'd to the rushing of the restless air.
The blessed starlight shone not on the shroud,
And the fair sky seem'd pall'd as with a cloud,
Which deeper terror by its contrast gave
To those most fearful features of the grave.
Voiceless the Rebel gazed—an icy thrill
Crept to his heart, and on his brow the chill
Large dew-drops gathered heavily and slow—
And the clogg'd life-streams curdled in their flow;
Yet knit, though blanch'd, his features! and his look,
A haughtier daring with each instant took
Till the cold spell was broke, and with a start,
Which sent the blood unfetter'd from his heart,
He seized his sword, and to the casement sprung.
Wildly its fleshless hands the Spectre wrung;
And deepest wo—intense—ineffable—
O'er the wan brow and lifeless aspect fell;
And from those lips, *which never stirr'd*, a cry
Went shrill and moaning up the quiet sky.
Rung not that sound familiar to his ear?
When last it rose '*t was o'er his Mother's bier!*
He heard the Death-cry of his house—he saw
The ghastly Agent of unearthly law;
He knew the warning Spirit of the tomb,
And felt how fix'd the fiat of his doom!

The snape was gone—the stars shone calmly there,
And o'er his hot brow came the reckless air,
And naught but Night was round him—there he stood
ALONE WITH CONSCIENCE IN THE SOLITUDE!

END OF THE SECOND CANTO

O'NEILL; OR, THE REBEL.

CANTO THE THIRD.

ARGUMENT OF THE THIRD CANTO.

Opening Invocation. The preparations for the Nuptials of Ellen and Marlow. Marlow's words to his dependant Carlton, in reference to the arrangement for the Scene that shortly follows. Description of Marlow. The interruption in the Chapel, &c. The Conflict. Morning. The contrast of Nature with our passions. O'Neill's wound. Ellen's Illness. Marlow's feelings—and his fears lest O'Neill should divulge his former Intercourse with that Chief. The Scene in the Prison—and the Conference between Marlow and O'Neill. The Judgment Day. The Condemnation of the Rebel. His return to Prison. The Stranger who visits him, &c. The Day of Execution. Description of the solitary House, facing the Scaffold, and the two forms that watch within it. O'Neill's appearance on the Scaffold. His Speech. He speaks to Marlow (as agreed on before, in their conference in the Prison). The unlooked-for termination of the Scene. The Story returns to Ellen, and concludes.

O'NEILL; OR, THE REBEL.

I.

Eternal Air—and thou, my mother Earth,
Hallow'd by shade and silence—and the birth
Of the young moon* (now watching o'er the sleep
Of the dim mountains and the dreaming deep);
And by yon Star, Heaven's eldest born—whose light
Calls the first smile upon the cheek of Night;
And beams and bodes, like Faith beyond the tomb,
Life through the calm, and glory through the gloom;
My mother Earth—and ye her loftier race,
Midst whom my soul hath held its dwelling-place;
Rivers and Rocks, and Valleys, and ye Shades
Which sleep at noonday o'er the haunted glades
Made musical by waters, and the breeze
All idly dallying with the glowing trees;
And songs of birds which, ever as they fly,
Breathe soul and gladness to the summer sky;
Ye courts of Nature where aloof and lone
She sits and reigns with darkness for her throne;
Mysterious temples of the breathing God,
If mid your might my earliest steps have trod;
If, in mine inmost spirit still are stored
The wild deep memories childhood most adored;
If still amid the drought and waste of years,
Ye hold the source of smiles and pangless tears;
Will ye not yet inspire me?—for my heart
Beats low and languid—and this idle art

Which I have summon'd for an idle end
Forsakes and flies me like a faithless friend—
Are all your voices silent? I have made
My home as erst amid your thickest shade:
And even now your soft air from above,
Breathes on my temples like a sister's love.
Ah! could it bring the freshness of the day,
When first my young heart linger'd o'er its lay;
Fain would this wintry soul and frozen string
Recall one wind—one whisper from the Spring!

Will ye not yet inspire me? for I know
Ye are not long for me! All feebly flow
The life-streams in my bosom, and no more
Can bound with joy to hail you as of yore;
And in this stillest solitude, I hear
The rushing of wild wings—*the Dead are near!*
For I so long have call'd them from their home,
My spells have won their secret—*and they come!*
Nor yet without a token:—they depart,
But *here* their trace clings, tight'ning round my heart.
But ye whom I have honour'd wheresoe'er
Your empire spreads with the unbounded air,
To you the soul ye nurtured shall bequeath
The last gift of these ashes—ye shall wreath
The green boughs of the summer, and the bloom
Of flowers most loved and earliest, on my tomb.
Your free breath shall not languish o'er my grave,
Clogg'd by the rank vault and the charnel cave;
But come as fresh as to its wing were given
Pledge from your life, and promise from your heaven!

II.

But let me onward; nor invoke in vain
A vanish'd spirit to this wayward strain:
Alas! no seal upon the past is set
Save *one*, *Remembrance*—wiser named, *Regret!*

Not stillest grove, lone mountain, nor deep dell,
Where Thought once wander'd, and the golden well
Of Poesy sprung forth, and flow'd on flowers,
Have aught but languor for our later hours;
Or aught *but echo* for the heart and lute,
Whose strings are broken:—when will they be mute?
'T is not the years which wither nor return—
The youth alone for which we wildly yearn;
'T is not Time's wings—it is the wrecks they strew,
The thoughts, hopes, feelings, *all* which wither too!
But let me onward:—I have paused too long,
And turn once more my spirit to my song.
Light heed have I for honour, and its praise
Is scarce for minstrels in "these later days;"
And haply all unheard the Wanderer's hand
Hath waked the wild harp of an alien land,
And well he bodes—if *not* unheard the lyre—
The critic's cavil and the zealot's ire.
Yet hath he loved his task, because it brings
At times free thoughts to consecrate his strings,
(And his first youth was taught by air and sea,
And *its own soul*—to worship all things free;)
But *mostly* loved—because its visions bear
His own dark spirit from its sullen lair,
And lead it through the labyrinth of a dream,
To lose this weary being!——
To my theme!

III.

Bright shone the lustres from the tapestried wall,
Where Ellen sat in Marlow's princely hall;
The garlands wreathed her forehead, and her breast
Heaved, like soft waves, beneath her snowy vest.
And gems and whitest roses glittered fair
Through the long tendrils of her ebon hair.
She sat unheeding all; her eyes, unmix'd
With fear or hope, upon the floor were fix'd,

The hand that clasp'd her sire's was wan of hue,
And slow and languid flow'd the life-blood through.
Her lips were closed—yet did not all depart
The smile that spoke the softness of her heart;
Grief had not dimm'd that rainbow of gone years,
But left its light to tell of clouds and tears.
The stern old father sat beside, nor took
From that pale cheek the fondness of his look,
And ever as he gazed, and saw the gloom
So deeply brooding o'er her blighted bloom,
He felt his heart, which to that coming vow
Had pledged the victim—vainly smite him now.

IV.

But more apart stood Marlow, and the guile
Of his dark soul shed venom on his smile,
He held a paper where the words, though few,
Still bore enough to change his wonted hue.
He turn'd—his favourite menial stood beside,
And his brow settled to its sullen pride.
"Carlton, perchance ere morn yon maid may hear
But rugged music for a bridal ear:
But they who cope with Marlow must prepare
A stronger warfare, or a deeper snare.
The soldiers, Carlton?—"
"All prepared."
"Enough!
If rude our guests, the greeting shall be rough.
But screen our ambush well, nor let the band,
Till sounds my signal, leave its latent stand.
They dream'd not of this mine themselves shall spring,
But *Fate* is *Retribution*—and we wing—
As in the fable did the eagle's plume,
From our own breast the arrow of our doom."

V.

Of cold and cautious temper, of a mind
Where Virtue check'd not aught that Art design'd,
Of all that talent of the toiling brain
Which wastes young years—if tamely—not in vain;
Of all that magic of perverted speech,
Which touches more because it seems to teach;
Form'd from his birth each dictate to despise
Save that which taught (no matter how!) to rise,
Scorning no grovelling if it led to gain,
Though mid the foulest mazes of chicane,
False Marlow pass'd through all the steps which climb
Ambition's height—the Cromwell of his time.
But Envy, aye too prying into truth,
At times would prate of Marlow's earlier youth,
And hint those accents now so sagely raised
For all who rule—far falser precepts praised;
That he so foremost in the courtly cause
Had pandered once for meaner crowds' applause;
Nor preached as now that Justice never fails,
Arm'd with her sword though cheated of her scales,
But foam'd with fancies for the public weal,
And call'd for Freedom with a Roman's zeal.
Nay, some there were who in more veil'd surmise
Had to the Past attach'd a traitor's ties,
And mutter'd much of secrets unreveal'd
Of which the slightest would his fate have seal'd.
But these seem'd idle, and with every day
Beneath his growing glory died away.
If true, what boots it?—in the game of earth
Who wins, takes all—fame, honour, wisdom, worth:—
And from the wings of Time our fortune shakes
Whate'er would vary from the name she makes.

VI.

The clock had toll'd the midnight—side by side
Went that glad bridegroom and the joyless bride,
And old Lord Ullin with his step of pride;
Follow'd the courtly priest with measured pace
Wooing the meet decorum to his face,
And the few ancient friends invited there
The fancied mirth to sanction and to share.—

They wound the stairs, and reach'd the chapel door,
Where fell the moonbeams o'er the marble floor,
And the high lamps at distant intervals
Stream'd calm and coldly from the cheerless walls.
They near'd the altar!—Indistinct and wan,
Lo! whose the form on which that gray light shone?
Mantled and silent o'er the shrine it bow'd
Fearful and dark—and shapeless as a cloud.
There was a pause abrupt and still as death!
The heart made mute its beating—and the breath
Died on the changing lip!—the scene—the night—
The pale hues borrow'd from that scanty light—
Gave to the mystic shape they dimly saw
Each ghastlier aid which fancy adds to awe.

VII.

Slowly the form arose—and sternly there
His voice went forth upon the breathless air.
"Why come ye here, false bridegroom and sad spouse,
To mock your Maker with your heartless vows?
And thou, old Lord, methinks long years should fade,
Ere thou forget the oath thou once hast made:
Yet scarce twelve moons have faded since the one
Which saw thee smile upon a nobler son.
Say, hath young Desmond's death absolved thee yet,
Or Marlow taught Lord Ullin to forget?"—

Lowering and wrathful grew that noble's brow,
And his lip trembled as he answer'd—" Thou
Most rude and rash intruder, dost thou fear
For this no vengeance?—wherefore art thou here?"
Calmly replied the stranger—" Haughty Lord!
Is all forgot as lightly as thy word?
Before thy gate I bade my subjects trace
The rank their sovereign destined to thy race;
Wrote they not there, meet triumph for thy pride,
'*We claim thy Daughter for our Chieftain's bride?*'
In vain to Desmond was the maiden plight,
In vain yon traitor names the nuptial night.
Amid ye all—before this solemn shrine,
I call Earth, Heaven, to witness—she is mine!"

VIII.

He said—he sprung—one instant, and she lay
Mute on his arm—for life had pass'd away,
And wan and voiceless, in oblivion bless'd
She lean'd, nor shudder'd at her place of rest.
Dark Marlow turn'd—
" Most noble Chieftain! where
The faithful band which should thy triumph share?
I deem thy valour more than wisdom shown,
If on this high exploit thou com'st alone."
Loud laugh'd the Rebel, and the walls around,
From arch to aisle, gave back that fearful sound.
He pointed towards the lattice deeply placed
Within the stone, and on the greensward based—
What gleams so redly? can the solemn stars
So wildly glitter through the casement bars?
What stirs so rudely? hath the Night-wind's wrath
Burst from its chamber in the gloomy North?
No—no! the torches which their right hands bear,
Fling on dark, dream-like forms that swarthy glare:
And the light breeze but faintly waves the glow
That sheds its light on such fierce brows below.

All stood aghast—when, moving from the shrine,
The Chieftain shouted the expected sign:
And shrill and loud rude voices answer'd;—flash'd
Torch upon torch, the riven lattice crash'd;
And through the opening, swift and hurrying pour'd
And closed in circling ranks the rebel horde.

"Behold my Bridesmen, Marlow!—could their power
Thy coffers lighten of a maiden's dower?
Bethink thee well, sage Reasoner! and rejoice
Thy dearer treasures did not claim our choice.
Dream on awhile o'er faith and country sold,
We spare to-night the Apostate and his gold;
But mark, thy days are number'd—dread to feel
The sworn revenge of Erin and O'Neill."
He said, and lightly from the altar sprung,
Along the aisle his echoing footsteps rung;
On his left arm his beauteous burthen lay,
His right hand dash'd Lord Ullin's grasp away,
His foot already reach'd the lattice:—lo!
He turns to meet—the bullet of his foe;
He met,—paused,—stagger'd,—and with one faint groan
Reel'd round—and sank upon the floor of stone.
Then dread was Marlow's danger: he had dared
Death from those hands which never yet had spared,
And tow'rds his form with a fierce cry, which rung
Like fate's own knell, those savage followers sprung.

IX.

They sprung—but not to see their victim fall;
Flash'd, as they moved, the flame—and hiss'd the ball,
For Marlow's pistol had the signal made,
And well that fiery watchword was obey'd;—
On, on, with breathless lips and hurrying march;—
On, through the sounding aisle and echoing arch:—
On, o'er the slain whom with each step they bore
Down—down—crush'd—trampled—gasping, on the floor;—

On, on—oh! where a refuge from their swords?
Sweep line by line the Battle's practised hordes.
Then rose the shout, the curse, the desperate yell,
Wrung from those breasts which fear'd not as they fell,
And burst the wrath of men, for years imbrued
In blood, who smote the smiter unsubdued,
And felt that thirst for slaughter which had made
Their very nature wedded to their trade;
Become like Leopards routed in their lair,
More fierce in death, more frantic through despair.

X.

Balm on its breeze, and glory on its light,
Morn came exulting on that fearful night;
Around the winding bay and rocky isles,
The green Atlantic sparkled into smiles;
And sent its gladness on the gentle waves,
Lulling the golden beach and legend-hallow'd caves
The bee and bird hung o'er the jasmine flowers,
And clust'ring ivy wreath'd round Marlow's towers.
While from the late polluted chapel's eaves,
Went the wild swallow through the dancing leaves.
We may not grave in Nature's living page
Trace of our sin, or record of our rage;
In that unsullied work wherein we see
The stamp and sanction of Eternity,
We make no change;—the toil,—the shock,—the strife,
Which form and fill the littleness of life;
Crimes, passions, all the whirlwinds of the heart,
Pass there like clouds, which darken but depart.

XI.

Of all the rebels who that lawless strife
Had dared—but two had Fortune saved for life—
Norman, the one, had gained the latticed space
And fled, and baffled justice in the chase;

And he—the other;—bleeding—speechless—chill,
They found the Arch-destroyer breathing still.
Oh! not for him the warrior fate to yield
Life stern and struggling on the battle-field;
But they who gather'd with fierce looks around
To tend with all Revenge's care his wound,
Still in his dull ear told the juster meed,
Shame link'd with Death for crimes like his decreed.

XII.

But o'er a *holier* couch with tenderest care
Hung the fond form and rose the anxious prayer;
There plied the Leech the learning of his art
To heal the frame,—ah! wherefore not the heart?
Where is the comfort when from Death we rise
To find the light grown weary to our eyes?
When Earth hath lost its charm—and over all
The sullen spirit throws its gloomy pall?
The glorious sky, the rapture of the air,
Have naught but clouds and coldness for despair,
And life to those whose Sun of Hope is set,
Seems Death without its blessing—*to forget!*
Was it for this—that from the Rebel's side
They bore and saved that young devoted bride,
When couch'd unconscious on so rude a breast
Wet with his blood she found her nuptial rest?
She woke to life, but not to health—the storm
Of that wild night had scathed her feeble form,
And left its token in the trembling frame
And pulse, which weaker with each day became.
The nerves were shatter'd, and the blight conceal'd
Long at her heart grew visibly reveal'd.
Her mind had lost the *youth*—the exulting spring
Which gifts the body with an angel's wing;
The elastic freshness of our golden years
Ere sorrow breaks or disappointment sears;

Which makes young sufferings trivial, and can seize
Its sting from pain, its lingering from disease,
And ere we feel the loss—restore the same
Bloom to the cheek and vigour to the frame!

This was no more!—She faded like a tree,
Shading a tomb, and withering silently.
The beam, the breeze, may come there and depart,
But death is round it, death is at its heart;
Drooping and sad, its buds—its branches—all
Bend o'er the tomb on which it soon must fall.

XIII.

True sung the bard—" For love *men* have not died,"
For man's wild passion is subdued by pride;
But *woman's* nature is more soft and deep,
And Care is cankering while it seems to sleep.
Thought shrinks and centres in one poison'd source,
And veil'd Decay steals darkly on its course;
Fades the fair form, the bright cheek waxes pale,
And hearts grow still *which never told their tale.*

XIV.

If deep the wo with which the sire survey'd
His life's last sunbeam sinking into shade,
Scarce less the grief with which false Marlow eyed
The daily fading of his destined bride,
And saw at once the alliance and the land
Grasp'd in his visions, melting from his hand.
With this came doubt and terror on his breast,
He strove in vain to reason into rest;
For there were secrets he would not have known,
Which knit O'Neill's past history with his own;
And as the Rebel's wound (how Marlow cursed
The aim which spared him, and the hand which nursed)

Wax'd well and healthful, and the day at last
Was fix'd for judgment's record to be pass'd,
Remembrance waked remorse, and fear's control
Shook to its inmost seat that stubborn soul.

XV.

It was the night before that dreaded day,
Dark in his rugged cell the Rebel lay.
Feeble and faint the sullen light which shone
O'er that grim chamber and its walls of stone,
And its faint glimmerings indistinctly shed
Where Crime couch'd sleepless on its wretched bed.
Beside that bed, with ear and heart intent
On that strange midnight conference, Marlow bent.
Thick were those ancient walls, and none were near,
Yet scarce their low tones caught the other's ear.
"O'Neill, I tell thee," whispered Marlow's voice,
"Thy life may yet be centred in thy choice,
Albeit thou deem'st the latest die is cast,
And the gull'd rope must have its food at last.
When *we* confer there needs not the disguise
Which cloaks the heart from less experienced eyes:
Hear me then plainly; thou may'st think to buy,
And sweet the thought, Revenge by Treachery;
And show,—at least so haply Hatred deems,—
Mine old alliance with thy daring schemes.
But listen,—Death has now from earth removed
The one who only could thy charge have proved:
Modred, that double traitor, he who brought
To each the tidings which the other taught;
Who made to thee mine inmost secrets known,
But bared, in turn, the mysteries of thine own;
Who, on that stormy night when last we met,
Betray'd the moment for my nuptials set;
Yet, mine no less, thy ruffian scheme confess'd,
And help'd to mar—but thou recall'st the rest.

Fool more than knave, that night he join'd thy band:
Enough! thou know'st how certain is my hand.
The false are ever dangerous—death is sure,
Thy witness sleeps, and Marlow is secure.
So that if now thy word condemn me, who
Will prove thy charges, or believe them true?
Oh! slight I ween the accusation's weight
Which comes from Fortune's outcast on the great;
But though thy malice could not scathe or shame,
Yet smallest doubts will ofttimes dim the fame,
And e'en that smallest doubt my soul would shun—
Suppress its utterance, and thy life is won.
Thou know'st my power—deserve it—from the state
My voice shall wring reprieval of thy fate:
And ere a month be pass'd myself will be
Throned with that state—and then O'Neill is free.
Now speak—thine answer—art thou friend or foe?"
Stern from his couch where listlessly and low
Till then, as if half heedless, he had bow'd,
Rose the dark chief and sat erect and proud.
"Marlow, the storm long seen at length has burst,
But he who braves must learn to bear the worst.
Thy words are vain, not all thy boasted power
Could buy this life the length'ning of an hour.
My doom is fix'd, already dug my grave;
Whom England dreads—all Erin could not save.
But deem'st thou truly, that thy tongue can cheat
A heart so long inured to thy deceit?
Wert thou my judge, meet grace thou wouldst afford!
Wert thou my hangman, strong would be the cord!
Oh! couldst thou e'er forget *that Death is sure*
When sleeps the witness—Marlow is secure.

Bound by one oath, one object, one design,
Thy scheming spirit link'd its lot to mine;
Hope shone—those links though secret bound us both;
Hope set—they shivered!—what to thee thine oath?

Thine was the choice on perjured faith to steer
From wreck to fortune—*mine*—behold it *here!*
Now hear me, Marlow—though I fain would cast
Food to revenge and light upon the past,
And send thy branded name to latest time
In all its foul deformity of crime;
Yet not one word shall harm thee: we have met
Link'd in one cause, one oath unites us yet—
That oath has pass'd not with its cause away,
But still forbids my spirit to betray.

My lot has fall'n on darkness and on strife,
And sin hath stain'd and misery mark'd my life;
And o'er my corpse shall whitening lips reveal,
Tales of wild deeds—the darings of O'Neill.
Whate'er its guilt, the erring life they scan,
May mark the ruffian, not disown the man.
O'Neill ne'er wrested from the poor their gain,
Ne'er heard the voice of woman plead in vain;
Ne'er stirr'd one step from man's most hostile blow,
Nor broke one plighted word to friend or foe!

But—(nearer, Marlow!) in my power are stored,
Proofs that would give thee to the hangman's cord;
Proofs that thy loyal love too well proclaim,
Writ by thy hand and sanction'd by thy name.
These, the sole tokens of our olden plot,
Are hid, sage Marlow, in a secret spot:
And—nay, reply not—shall be in thy power,
If on the scaffold at Life's latest hour
Thou by my side wilt stand, then ere the breath
Which yet can save or slay thee yield to death,
Approach, and to thy ear shall be reveal'd
The archives where that witness is conceal'd.
Now take thy choice, for by *our* oath I swear
The secret shall be shown but then and there.
Thou wilt—enough: now home with joyous heart,
Night wanes and sleep is on my soul—depart!"

XVI.

Lone in his cell the musing Rebel lay,
And watch'd the dull hours lead the ling'ring day.
Crime gives men courage—with its wintry years
The heart congeals, and freezes o'er its fears.
They who lose hope, lose terror, and the course
Of sane emotion withers at its source.
The worst once borne, it boots not what we bear,
And man's best virtue grows but Sin's despair:
Yet cold the thoughts which found their bitter food
In that most still and midnight solitude.
To die was nothing—they whose years are strife,
Will welcome death in weariness of life.
But mid the rabble crowd, obscene and low
Thus to be set—the marvel of the show;
To wake dull wonder in each idle eye,
And grow the monster of the Newsman's lie;
To bear the threat—to wince beneath the gibe
Of Law's pert sons—the soul-contracted tribe,
Who feed on crimes and fatten on distress,
And wring vile mirth from Suffering's last excess;
To stand alone and friendless—and begirt
With eagerest foes all panting to pervert,
And shape by some strange alchymy of sense
His worst accuser from his own defence:
And then that humbling pity of the crowd,
Which more than all is poison to the proud:—
This well might wring that spirit, well might bring
To thought its torture, and to death its sting.

XVII.

The morn—the moment came: the Court was set,
The accusers summon'd, and the gazers met,
And all his heart foreboded doom'd to feel,
Stood calm and changeless to the last—O'Neill!

And oft he check'd the lip—but clench'd the hand—
And starting oft as oft resumed his stand.
And when O'Neill had ceased, he turn'd his eye
Full on the Chief and *look'd* his brief reply.
No need of words!—in that one look were told
Fierce thoughts for which all language had been cold.
Oh! when the swelling heart to heart would speak,
In vain the weak lips would its silence break,
It *shows*—not *tells* its mysteries—it displays
Its deep abysses in a glance—the blaze
Of lightning not more rapidly unfolds
The world of cloud in which its home it holds,
And bares before us with an instant's light,
The scenes and secrets of the broken night.

XXI.

There was a pause—till with a sudden start
They heard the Jailer's summons to depart,
As on its hinge the door turn'd heavily,
And strove the harsh lock with the grating key.
Then o'er the Rebel's features with the spell
Of buried thoughts, a softening shadow fell;
Is it the Jailer's lamp perchance too near
Which dims that eye, or can it be a tear?
Out on the heart's perversity, so oft
To *Guilt* as callous as to *Feeling* soft!
So madly reckless where the *Future*'s cast
And yet so fond a craven to the *Past!*
Again with voice, though faint and stifled, clear
He pour'd new mandates on that trusted ear.
And as he spoke and deathlier wax'd his hue,
A hidden treasure from his breast he drew—
Oh, through all change how cherish'd by that heart,
And now—from life 't were not such pang to part!
With trembling fingers, with that hurried air
Which shows the wish by one brief wrench to tear

Its last loved thing from life, and cannot brook
The bitterest penance of a *latest* look,
Nor trust the thought to pause the while it dooms,
Lest it belie the courage it assumes,
He placed that token in the stranger's hand,
And breaking off as if at once unmann'd,
Turn'd to the wall and waved his last adieu,
Nor heard the steps which heavily withdrew;
Nor mark'd the gloom which once more round him fell,
Alas! where fled his spirit from that cell?

XXII.

Day rose in sorrow!—from the clouds which dun
And dim lay round him gleam'd the heavy Sun,
And then retired, for the great winds which swept
The rolling vapours hush'd themselves, and crept
As Noon advanced, with a low moaning sigh,
Into the dull womb of the haggard sky;
And all was rayless; heaviness and cloud
Sat on that death of Nature—like its shroud;
Day wore the garb of Night, and darkness curl'd
Around, and canopied the gloomy world.

XXIII.

Before the lofty scaffold widely bow'd,
Dense, wedged, and gathering roll'd the mighty crowd,
Link'd in one shapeless mass, and fearfully
Swaying and murmuring like a troubled sea;
There stood one house advanced before the rest,
And there the space grew narrow and compress'd,
And the high garden boundaries stretch'd along
Enclosed its confines from the rushing throng.
In that secluded mansion's loftiest room
Were met two forms, who on the place of doom
Look'd forth and spake not,—breathless and apart
Each sat and fed the fever of his heart.

Norman—methinks that link'd with deeds like thine,
Dark is the comrade, desperate the design.
Well was that dwelling known to those whose zeal
Had knit their fate to darkness and O'Neill;
And fitting seem'd such spot to those who meet
On plans where wisdom would not scorn retreat;
For wrought beneath were winding caverns made
To shield the stores of wealth's most precious trade;
Those ruby spells by which the Teian sung
To sweeter chords than *youth* has ever strung.
Those vaults had other entrance where the way
Through streets remote and rarely haunted lay;
And one led idly through that lonely place
Two harness'd steeds of England's hardiest race.

XXIV.

Hark! through that wide throng went a low and deep
And mingling sound, like winds which break from sleep,
To meet and mutter on the giant hill—
A press, a rushing, and then all was still;
Still as the sky which lay in heavy rest,
Hushing the tempest couch'd within its breast.
And on that scaffold stood, erect and proud,
Its victim glancing on the gloomy crowd.
Saddening and strange the contrast of the fair
And faultless features with their haughty air,
And of the youth so touching in its bloom,
With the black memory of its guilt and doom.
Behind him stood the priest, and close beside
Reluctant Marlow in his solemn pride,
And well the fear and fever which prevail'd
O'er his false heart those sullen features veil'd.
When with one circling glance O'Neill had view'd
The vast and still and moveless multitude,
He spake, and deeply roll'd his voice along
Into the rapt souls of the breathless throng:—

XXV.

"I speak not for your pity—nor to win
Tears for my lot, or tolerance from my sin,
My guilt against the oppressors hath been great,
And now it meets, nor murmurs at, its fate;
But vainly dooms are fix'd and blood is spill'd,
While lives the oppression there must last the guilt,
And every rebel drop they shed returns
Again to life, and in our offspring burns:
Yet let my fate forewarn you, ye may drain
Your very hearts in struggling, but in vain.
Groan but endure—if Hope be sown in tears,
Its fruit shall ripen in the smile of years.
Though through the gloom of Time no star hath shone,
Though worn and weak ye wander darkling on,
The word has gone which to the womb of night
Proclaim'd, 'Let light be;' and there *shall* be light.
Ye who behold me, when in after-years
My name comes clothed with curses on your ears,
When each who reck'd not of its secret springs,
O'er my dark life the darker scandal flings,
Say to your sons that, though the tale be true,
The life was spent—the guilt incurr'd for *you:*
Say that the Rebel's erring heart and hand,
False to his King, was loyal to his land:
Say this, and add, that when his doom was pass'd
His soul was yours, and fearless to the last;
And if one murmur pass'd his lips, its tone
Rose for his Country's sufferings, *not* his own!"

XXVI.

Why as he moves away, so wistfully
Turns to that nearest house his wand'ring eye?
Why, through the half-shut lattice, as they catch
That glance and gesture from their lonely watch—

Why grow that pair so deadly pale and still?
Why curdles o'er their blood so damp a chill?
Alas! whate'er the cause, it cannot bear
A hope for him whose latest scene is there.
He turn'd—on Marlow meaningly he glanced,
Whose pale cheek flush'd as slowly he advanced.
They met: the Rebel closing still more near
Bent down, and whisper'd in his eager ear.
Whate'er the import of those words, no sound
Broke on the heavy silence brooding round;
And list'ning Marlow scarcely seem'd to breathe,
So rapt his interest in their sense. Beneath
The scaffold there were hearts which *still'd* the sigh,
And tears which roll'd *unfelt* from every eye;
And, over all, the aching heaviness
Of Feeling wrought unto its strain'd excess,
Sat like an Incubus, and hotly press'd,
Mastering, and weighing on, the labouring breast.

XXVII.

A shot, a flash upon the stillness broke,
Along the scaffold roll'd the wreathing smoke;
Hark! hark again!—a sharp and sudden cry
Along the gloomy air burst piercingly.
Slow rose the smoke—and there dark Marlow lay,
Steep'd in his blood and gasping life away;
Pass'd o'er his changing cheek the with'ring air
Which knits the body's with the soul's despair;
Pass'd o'er his limbs the shudder and the strife
Of Death's stern angel with reluctant life;
The lips shrink parting from the teeth,—and now
Darker and darker glooms the livid brow;
And from the lids start forth the straining balls,
Where the dull film more glazed and ghastly falls;
Then comes the choked and gurgling groan—the last,
Most brief—most bitter struggle—*it is past!*

Beside, with eyes upon his victim bent,
Full of fierce joy, the stricken Rebel leant
On the priest's ready arm—and from his side
Oozed, drop by drop, the faint yet fatal tide;
But not one trace of suffering came to break
The haughty stillness of the marble cheek;
To wring the muscle or distort the limb:—
The death he fear'd not, brought no pang for him;
And, as the priest bent o'er him, low but clear
His broken accents reach'd the father's ear.

"Bless thee, my Norman!—welcome is the blow,
Mine eyes have seen my vengeance on my foe!
Last of my race, I drew from Kings my breath,
I die a warrior's—not a felon's death!
Whose grasp is that—off, off! ye slaves, and see
How souls can scorn your fetters and be—*free!*"

XXVIII.

The clouds with day had faded—soft and fair
Lay the still evening in the silver air.
Beside her lattice, where the flowers caress'd
That gentlest breeze—the wanderer of the west,
(While with its sighs wild birds their music blent,)
Lone on her couch the dying Ellen leant.

XXIX.

Her soul was absent—wandering far away
O'er the bright memories of a happier day,
And aye across her cheek's transparent hue
The blush broke faint yet all unconquer'd through.
In that dark eye—if you had gazed more near—
The light shone sad, and trembled through a tear;
And o'er her beauty—for death's hastening doom
But gave to softness what it marr'd in bloom—

There reign'd that dream-like and divine repose,
Which Life's most solemn hour alone bestows;
For ere we pierce the vague unfathom'd gloom
Which veils the mightiest mystery of our doom,
There seems some prescience of a bright'ning goal
To cheer the toil and darkness of the soul.
And—like the moment when the sunbeams leave
Their parting glory to the deep'ning eve,
Whate'er is earth's grows mingled with the sky,
And awes the spirit while it woos the eye.

There came the soft mute step we vainly curb
For those whom shortly nothing will disturb;
And the fond menial, when she nearer drew,
Turn'd her full eyes to shun the maiden's view,
And smooth'd the voice in which the rebel grief
Strove in each tone to find itself relief.
She gave a small slight casket quaintly wrought,
A stranger peasant had that instant brought:
Oh, as that dying hand the token took,
What flush'd the cheek—the frame so wildly shook?
The spring obey'd the touch—within was lain
Love's earliest gift—a locket—broke in twain:
She saw, nor shrunk—that gift to her return'd
Broke life's last tie—her lover's fate she learn'd:
She saw, nor shrunk—*one* look had power to kill;
The worst was wrought—the broken heart was still!

THE END.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE

SPARTAN MOTHER,

ON THE DEATH OF HER SON.

I.

My Son! not a tear shall be shed,
Tho' my heart be as dark as thy grave:
To weep would dishonour the dead—
For Greece hath no tears for the brave!

II.

In thy fall thou hast triumph'd, my Son!
And all Sparta has conquer'd with thee;
The race of thy glory is run—
But thy Country, thy Country is free!

III.

When thy hand gave thy father his shield—
As he left his last kiss on thy brow,
He said, "I go forth to the field—
But for Greece and for glory live thou!

IV.

"Yet if Hellas her hero should claim,
Oh! remember thy breast is her wall!"
He said—and he went to his fame—
He fell—as a Spartan should fall!

V.

And when years had bro't strength to thine arm,
And I gave thee the sword of the slain,
I felt not a moment's alarm—
But I arm'd thee myself for the plain.

VI.

As I braced on thy helmet, I smiled
At the valour that flash'd from thine eye:
I gave thee no lessons, my child—
I knew that thou *never* couldst fly!

VII.

Away with each whisper of wo!
Thou hast met with the fate thou hast braved,
But thy feet were not turned from the foe,
And thy Sparta, thy Sparta is saved!

TO THE DEAD.

I.

It is a hush'd and holy spot
   Where death has wrought thy dreamless bed,
And bade thee still, all unforgot,
   Forget—that charter of the dead!

II.

At length thy heart is cold; the pain
   Which wrings my own thou canst not see,
Nor turn to smiles this sullen strain,
   Which sooths—because it breaths of *thee!*

III.

If once my spirit stole the vow,
   But due to love, to waste on fame,
My only wish for laurels now
   Would be—to wreath them round thy name.

IV.

I would not thou shouldst cease to live
   While fame its being can bestow,
And to our broken passion give
   The deathless memory of our wo.

V.

In life a widow'd lot we bore,
   But all my own in death thou art!
The grave, which severs hands the more,
   But breaks the barriers from the heart.

VI.

As he who bore a charmed doom,
And saw friends—empires—ages fade,*
I live—a weed that wreaths its bloom
Around the wrecks which time has made!

VII.

Hope's latest link from life is wrench'd!
The bird which bless'd the night is fled!
The lamp which lit the tomb is quench'd!
I stand in darkness with the dead!

---

* St. Leon, in Godwin's tale.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE VIOLETS.*

By the silent foot of the shadowy hill
We slept in our green retreats,
And the April showers were wont to fill
Our hearts with sweets;

And though we lay in a lowly bower,
Yet all things loved us well,
And the waking bee left its fairest flower
With us to dwell.

But the warm May came in his pride to woo
The wealth of our virgin store,
And our hearts just felt his breath—and knew
Their sweets no more!

And the summer reigns on the quiet spot
Where we dwell—and its suns and showers
Bring balm to our sisters' hearts—but not—
Oh! not—to *ours*!

We live—we bloom—but for ever o'er
Is the charm of the earth and sky—
To our life, ye heavens, that balm restore
Or—bid us die!

---

* Which lose their scent in May.

SCULPTURE.*

Marmoris aut eboris fabros aut æris amavi.—Hor. Ep. lib. 2. l. 9.

The winds were hush'd on Pindus—and the day,
Balm'd by a thousand sweets, had died away—
The wave beneath, the laurel on the hill
Bask'd in the heaven's blue beauty—and were still:—
Pomp—Silence—Night were reigning on the earth,
Nymph, whom my rude verse worships, at thy birth!
The Muses rear'd thee in their starry caves,—
Laved thy fair limbs beneath their holiest waves,—
And taught the wild soul speaking from thine eye
To quaff the light of Genius from the sky.
There, by lone mount, and vale, and deep-brow'd dell,
There, by the bee-loved flowers, and mossy cell,—
There, by the glories of the summer noon,
And the sweet sadness of the midnight moon—
Thy spirit stored within its still recess
The myriad forms of Nature's loveliness ;—
The grand—the soft—the lofty—and the fair
Woo'd thy warm thoughts—and made their dwelling
there.
'T is said—what minstrel doubts the legend's truth ?—
The day-god loved thee from thine earliest youth,
And pour'd around the musings of thy heart
The shadowy splendours of his holiest art—
To substance fix'd the bright thoughts all his own,
And breathed the life of Poesy to stone.
Inspiring visions rose at midnight's hour,
Wild shapes of Beauty throng'd thy haunted bower.

* This poem obtained the chancellor's medal at the Cambridge commencement, July, 1825.

Till o'er thy mind creative Genius grew—
And the hand sculptured what the fancy drew.
Nymph of old Castaly! thou lov'st to keep
Thy moon-lit vigils where the mighty sleep;
O'er the dim tomb to hold thy silent sway,
And rear thy marble triumphs o'er decay.
'T is thine to fix through ages fresh and warm
The frail perfection of the fading form;—
And though no more by cool Cephisus' stream*
The Queen of Beauty haunts the minstrel's dream—
Though now no more on Tempe's classic vale
Apollo's locks win worship from the gale,
Yet still thy spells preserve them to the eye,—
Chain to the earth the bright forms of the sky,—
And raise high spirits from the mine and ore,
That crowds may gaze,—and Genius may adore!
To thee, where old Ilyssus roves along
The olive banks, all eloquent with song,
The bright Athenian bent his thoughtful brow,
Breathed his young thoughts, and pour'd his lonely vow.
And the far Isle of Roses† o'er the sea
Rear'd her world's wonder as a shrine for thee;—
Where is that vast Colossus, which bestrode
The free waves like Ambition?—while they flow'd
Hushing their wrath like slaves—as through yon arch
Fraught with earth's wealth, the proud barks went their march?
Where is that brazen pomp was wont to throw
Back on the Sun the glory of his glow—
And seem the Genius of that daring clime,
Dazzling all eyes, and form'd for every time—
Earth at its feet, and Heaven upon its brow—
Symbol of Greece,—and art thou nothing now!

* Τοῦ καλλινάου τ' ἀπὸ Κηφισοῦ ῥοὰς
Τὰν Κύπριν κλῄζουσιν ἀφυσ-
σαμέναν. Eurip. Med. 842.

† Rhodes.

Enough!—on forms unwreck'd beneath the blast
Or blight of ages, be our wonder cast—
Is it a goddess? lo! I bend the knee,
Dream of heaven's beauty! let me worship thee!
Thou art indeed too lovely for the earth
As earth is now—thy charms are of the birth
Of her first morn—when every flower was trod
And every fount was hallow'd by its god—
And brighter beings wander'd from above
To win the treasure of a mortal's love.
Oh! o'er the sculptor's spirit pour'd each ray
Which memory hoarded of that golden day,—
Each thought of grace, or goddess lingering still
By silver stream, or Oread-haunted hill,
All which the soul deems bright, or passion dear—
When his wild fancy turn'd—and fixed them *here!*
Oft at deep noon—what time the wearied gale
Slept on the violets—while the shadowy vale,
The fairy music of the wood-bird's lay,
The glad bee murmuring on his perfumed way,
The green leaves laughing in the quivering beams,
Lull'd the luxurious spirit in wild dreams.
Oft hath the marvel of thy beauty stole,
Sweet shape, along the visions of my soul!
E'en as when young Adonis woo'd thy vow,—
E'en as thou glowest from the marble now,—
E'en as thou stood'st 'mid vanquished gods above,
In breathing, palpable, imbodied love.
Terrible! mark, and tremble!—fold by fold,
See round the writhing sire* the enormous serpent's roll'd;
Mark the stern pang—the clench'd despairing clasp—
The wild limbs struggling with that fatal grasp—
The deep convulsion of the labouring breath—
Th' intense and gathering agony of death.

* Laocoon

Yet 'mid the mortal's suffering still is view'd
The haughty spirit shaken—not subdued,
Though nature faint, though every fibre burst,
Scathed—stifled—crush'd—let vengeance wreak its
worst;
Fate—terror—hell—let loose your powers of ill,
Wring the rack'd form—the soul can scorn you still.
Nymph of my song! I turn my glance, and lo!
The Archer-god speeds vengeance from his bow.—
Not, as when oft, amid his Delian glade,
The Lord of Beauty knelt to mortal maid;
Not, as when winds were hush'd—and waves lay mute
Listing, and lull'd beneath, his silver lute;—
But like the terrors of an angry sky,
Clouds on his brow, and lightning in his eye.
The foot advanced—the haughty lips apart—
The voice just issuing from the swelling heart—
The breathing scorn—Yet 'mid that scorn appear
No earthlier passions mix'd with human fear;
The god speaks from the marble not the less
Than when heaven brightens with his loveliness,
And o'er each limb th' enamour'd Graces play,
Leave wrath its *pride*, but steal its *gloom* away.
Yes, at those feet, the bard of Isis sung,*
Oft in deep love the maiden's form was flung,
And her soul fed on passion, till her thought
Madden'd beneath the anguish it had sought,
And health with hope departed—and the flush
Of fever deepen'd o'er youth's purer blush—
Grief's canker prey'd upon her withering bloom,
And love's wild vision woke but in the tomb.
E'en thus of old the Cyprian sculptor† view'd
The star-like form which bless'd his solitude—
From earth and earthly beauty he had flown,
And graved a dream of loveliness on stone;—

* Alluding to the story of the "Maid of France," which has been so beautifully applied by Mr. Milman.
† Pygmalion.

And made a temple of his beating heart,
To worship the perfection of his art.—
And aye he knelt adoring—none were near
Th' empassioned homage of his vows to hear.
The unpeopled forest, and the murmuring wave—
The shadowy twilight of his lonely cave—
The mystic language of the rushing wind—
Nursed the voluptuous madness of his mind.
He rain'd warm kisses on th' unconscious face,—
Woo'd the mute marble to his wild embrace,—
Gazed till the cell swam round his reeling eyes,—
And the chill air was burning with his sighs,—
Hung on that lip, alas! so vainly fair—
And breath'd at last his very being there.
O'er the cold cheek rose Passion's blushing hue—
Slowly to life the kindling statue grew,
Caught the warm spirit from his soul's excess,
And breathed and moved in living loveliness.
Years have roll'd on, alas! no longer now
Round Hella's sword blooms Freedom's myrtle bough,
There, 'mid the gorgeous piles which still proclaim
Unchanged—the changes of her fallen fame,
Smit by the bolt, and bow'd beneath the blast
Of fate,—she sits—the spectre of the past.—
Yet still the warm Italian loves her lore,
Gleans the rich harvest from each haunted shore.
O'er his rude harp the Roman minstrel flings
Flowers from her wreath, and music from her strings;
And from his native banks to Tiber's tide
Th' Athenian sculptor wafts the Parian pride—
Glows the live statue, and the polish'd dome,
And Greece hath found a second birth in Rome.
Still the young Faun amid the wild-flowers sleeps—
Still his carousal hoar Silenus keeps—
And still Diana's beauty glows as dear,
As when Endymion lured her from her sphere.

Still unsubdued amid the wrecks of years
Her lofty spear Athenian Pallas rears,—
And still—though thunder waits not on his nod,
Throned in his grandeur sits the imperial god.
Still in mad mirth the Bacchanalian throng
Weave the wild dance, and raise the frantic song—
And calm in stern repose—(his labours done)—
Stands, like a sleeping storm, Alcmæna's son.
Behold, where in his nerved and naked might
Rushes the Circus Champion to the fight—
Stretches the gaunt arm in its sweeping length—
Starts from each limb the eloquence of strength—
On the bent brow Pride, Power, and Conquest reign,
From the curved lip the spirit breathes disdain—
And all the savage in his sternest mood
Speaks from the form unawed and unsubdued!—
Where 'mid yon puny race of courts can be,
Son of the woods! the champion meet for thee?
The strife is o'er—e'en as a broken bow
Nerveless and spent—the Terrible lies low!—
He leans upon his hand—the lion crest
Bows to the dust—and from the untamed breast
Falls drop by drop life's tide—the eye is dim,
And o'er the buckler droops the giant limb—
And Death is on the Mighty!—Ay, thou proud
And guilty city! let thy ruthless crowd
Pour o'er their prey the mockery of their mirth,
Blood with those echoes calls forth from the earth—
And Heaven full soon shall answer.—Hurrying forth
Sweeps on dark wings the whirlwind of the North—
Hush—it hath pass'd!—By Tiber's glassy wave
Crouches—where Brutus trod—yon supple slave!
Where the voluptuous Cæsars held their sway,
Couch'd with the Vandal, saddens stern Decay,
Where in those halls Harmonia waked her strings,
Hark, the harsh shout of Gothic revel rings,

And o'er the pillow'd pomp and trophied arch
Gaunt Havoc speeds her desolating march.
But from the midnight of Time's dullest dream
Be ours to wake, and hail the earliest beam,—
Ages have pass'd—a star is in the skies—
The clouds are rent—and light and Leo rise.—
See, from each crumbling stone and mouldering bust
Admiring Genius clears th' unhallow'd dust!—
The buried pomp of years awakes once more—
The solemn Earth gives up her silent store—
And the world's second mourning pours its rays
Bright as of old, on Michael's eagle gaze!—
Approach and reverence, stranger! calm and lone
The Prophet Chief* claims homage from his throne,
From that broad brow, closed lip, and marble cheek,
And high repose, no human passions speak—
But power and majesty, august and proud,
Brood o'er the awful image,—like a cloud!
And in the lines of that unearthly face
The eye of Fancy in its gaze might trace
Deep visions of the future—the sublime
And mystic secrets of primeval time—
And the rapt holiness of him who heard
Through flame and darkness God's Eternal Word!
There the young shepherd† stands as when he trod
The earth, exulting in the might of God.—
Scorn'd the strong armour, and the giant limb—
And knew the Lord of Hosts was over *him!*
Round his light form no sheltering garments cling,
He wields no weapon but the simple sling;
Yet in the advancing step—the lofty mien—
The calm stern front—the undaunted soul is seen.
Though armies shrink around him;—though the brave
Doom in sad thought his rashness to the grave—

* "Moses" by Michael Angelo. † "David" by Michael Angelo.

God, who preserved him from the lion,* here
Is not less mighty—wherefore should he fear?
Alas for nations!—while we gaze, the spark
Of kindling light expires—and we are dark—
E'en while the gladd'ning minstrel turns to bless
This Tadmor smiling through Time's wilderness—
The brief and lonely incense of his breath
But wakes—like Nero's music—amid death.
Again long years!—from Superstition's chain
And the dull torpor of her gloomy reign
Thou wakest, Rome!—like Rhesus, but to feel
Deep in thy heart, the foeman's fatal steel!—
Scorning thy pride, and scoffing at thy faith,
Sweeps the fierce Gaul to slaughter and to scathe—
And darkly brooding o'er thy vanquish'd wall,
Thy rebel eagles triumph in thy fall.
Pass we with one brief curse, from Glory's toil,
The strife, the rout, the conquest, and the spoil;
Let thrones arise and crumble at a breath,
And man exalt in shackles or in death—
These are no fitting subjects for my lay,—
To colder climes we wing our wandering way—
And turn where glows in yonder gorgeous dome,
The Parian pomp of Hellas, and of Rome.†
Proud plumes are waving in the silent air,
The warriors of the earth are gather'd there—
Fair Britain's sons—the fearless and the free;
Romantic Spain, thy haughty chivalry;—
And that old warlike race, for whom the pride
Of the blue Danube rolls its lordly tide.
Hush'd the vain taunt, and awed the exulting eye,
Silently stalks the vengeful Prussian by—

* "David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine."—1 Sam. xvii. 37.

† I need scarcely observe that I allude to the collection of the Louvre, to which the troops of the allies when at Paris resorted in such numbers.

While in rude contrast to the stately crest,
The dazzling croslet, and the glittering vest,
With rugged garb, and wandering looks, pass on
The stern and simple wanderers from the Don.
But oft like clouds amid that gorgeous throng
Dark angry forms sweep loweringly along.
Not theirs the rapt delight—the soul's deep trance—
Grief rings the heart, and Passion fires the glance.
And ever from the writhing lip, the wrath
Of fierce and struggling spirits flashes forth.
The mutter'd vengeance, and the scornful jest—
The pent volcano of the labouring breast—
The unconquer'd hatred of the powerless will,
That bitter comfort of the conquer'd still!
But ye, upon whose marble brows serene
Ages of night in clouds and storms have been,
And pass'd like vapours from the morning star,
Hallowing the beauty which they could not mar;—
Ye, 'mid the littleness of human life,
The fading triumph, and the empty strife,
Calm in your lofty grandeur glance below
Unmoved by passions which ye never know,—
While empires fall around you,—ye retain,
Gods of the mind, your everlasting reign!—
And changeless in your power, behold the tide
Of fate but bear fresh homage to your pride.
Lo! as of old ye stand! the deep blue sky
Of Rome again hangs o'er you, and the eye
Which hails you in your native seats enshrined,
Gleans from all round meet moral for the mind.
  Yes, there from every clime shall Genius bring
The vows and incense of her earliest spring;
And to those fanes the pilgrim still shall roam,
And SCULPTURE find her altar and her home,—
Warm'd into life beneath these genial skies,
Round the far Dane,* what fair creations rise!

* Thorwaldsen.

Here when the moonlight o'er those myrtle groves
Flings its pale beam, the German Wanderer* roves,
And bears rich visions home, to gild the cell
Where, lone and musing, Fancy loves to dwell—
The bright Enthusiast of the Isle shall trace
In colder climes each well-remember'd grace;
Recall and rival all that Greece hath known,
And wake, like *Chantrey*, Eloquence from stone.
And there, fair land! thine own Canova still
Rears o'er thy woes the triumphs of his skill;
Charming the gods again to haunt the earth,
And waking beauty to a second birth.
  Though fair the way the pilgrim may have pass'd,
Turns he not home exultingly at last?
And though in climes to Muse and Memory dear
My soul is lingering—I recall it *here*—
Lo! where through cloister'd aisles, the soften'd day
Throws o'er the form a "dim religious" ray,
In graven pomp and marble majesty
Stands the immortal Wanderer of the Sky—†
The sage, who, borne on Thought's sublimest car,
Track'd the vague moon, and read the mystic star.—
Sway'd from the planet, or the desert cloud,
To him the Spirits of the Night were bow'd—
Hoar Time reveal'd his marvels—Nature drew
Her secret veil from his undazzled view—
For him, her glowing depths had solemn speech,—
And myriad worlds—life—glory—God in each,
Hymning high joy though Heaven's eternal dome,
Blazed from the darkness round Jehovah's home!
Mark ye—how well the kindling Sculptor took
The sweeping robe—the majesty of look—
And o'er each feature's lofty beauty wrought
The deep, intense, pervading soul of thought,

* Danneker.

† These and the following lines, which refer to the statue of Newton in Trinity College Chapel, have been added by the permission of the vice-chancellor, since the adjudication of the prize.

And that ethereal sunshine which in him
Life could not cloud, and Passion could not dim,
As if the Spirit which had wing'd its way
Through Heaven had purged each earthlier sense away.
Oh, may his influence hallow yet the scene
Where once the lustre of his life hath been!—
And—though perchance in vain, Ambition's toil,
Youth's dreaming hope—and Labour's midnight oil,
Yet, ere the evil days of strife and sin
Have thrown their shadows o'er the light within,
Learn we from him that truth least understood,—
Man is most great while struggling to be good.
My harp's rude notes are dying—all too long;
My soul hath pour'd its spirit into song,
And yet I pause—What though the weeds I bring
Waft no rich incense from the breathing spring.
I pause—a Northern votary's wreath to twine,
Land of the Roman, round thy ruin'd shrine.
Oh, from thy lore if ere his mind hath caught
For fancy fire, or energy for thought,
If from the sculptured form, and sacred strain
For him the beauty was not waked in vain,
Then all ungrateful would the Minstrel be
Had not his lyre one parting note for thee.
Oh, as the image in that fabled scene*
In which Leontes mourns his buried Queen,
Came from the dim concealment of long years
(As rainbows shine through Nature's clouds and tears),
And bright with smiles descended from above,
Glowing with joy, and redolent of love—
Oh, thus from shrouded pomp, and silence deep,
Where memory sits to ponder and to weep—
Italia, wake! the hues of life resume—
And smile away the terrors of the tomb.

* Winter's Tale, Act v. Scene 3.

EUGENE ARAM,

A TRAGEDY.

[From the New Monthly Magazine.]

[THE reader may perhaps recollect that it was stated in the preface to the novel of "Eugene Aram," to have been the original intention of its author to have composed, upon the facts of that gloomy history, a tragedy instead of a romance. In taking leave of my friends (so far as this periodical is concerned), it may now be not altogether without interest for them if I submit to their indulgence the rough outline of the first act, and half of the second act, of a fragment of a drama, which, in all probability, will never be finished. So far as I have gone, the construction of the tragedy differs, in some respects, materially from that of the tale. I should add, that the scene and story being wholly of a rustic nature, I have purposely left the diction in many places somewhat rude and familiar, although the whole of what is now presented to the reader must be considered merely as a copy from the first rough and hasty sketch of an uncompleted design.—E. L. B.]

EUGENE ARAM,

A TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Aram's Apartment—Books, Maps, and scientific Instruments scattered around. In every thing else the appearance of the greatest poverty.

1st Creditor (*behind the scenes*). I must be paid.
Three moons have flitted since
You pledged your word to me.
2d Cred. And me!
3d Cred. And me!
Aram (*entering*). Away, I tell ye. Will ye rend my garb?
Away! to-morrow.—*Gentle* sirs, to-morrow.
1st Cred. This is your constant word.
2d Cred. We'll wait no more.
Aram. Ye'll wait no more! Enough! be seated, sirs.
Pray ye, be seated. Well! with searching eyes
Ye do survey these walls! Contain they aught—
Nay, take your leisure—to annul your claims?
(*Turning to 1st Cred.*) See, sir, yon books—they're yours, if you but tear
That fragment of spoiled paper—be not backward,
I give them with good-will. This one is Greek;
A golden work—sweet sir—a golden work;

It teaches us to bear—what I have borne!—
And to forbear men's ills, as you have done.

1*st Cred.* You mock me. Well—

Aram. Mock! mock! Alas! my friend,
Do rags indulge in jesting? Fy, sir, fy!
(*Turning to* 2*d Cred.*) You will not wrong me so? on your receipt
Take this round orb; it miniatures the world,—
And in its study I forgot the world!
Take this, yon table;—a poor scholar's fare
Needs no such proud support;—yon bed, too! Sleep
Is a sweet luxury—it laps lean care
Within the arms of the dream-mirror'd Past;
But Sleep and I have quarrelled;—take it, sir!

2*d Cred.* (*muttering to the others*). Come, we must leave him to the law, or famine.
You see his goods were costly at a groat!

1*st Cred.* Well, henceforth I will grow more wise! 'Tis said
Learning is better than a house or lands.
Let me be modest! Learning shall go free;
Give me security in house and lands.

3*d Cred.* (*lingering after the other two depart, offers a piece of money to Aram*). There, man; I came to menace you with law
And jails. You're poorer than I thought you!—there—

Aram (*looking at the money*). What! and a beggar, too! 'Tis mighty well.
Good sir, I'm grateful—I will *not* refuse you;
'Twill win back Plato from the crabbed hands
Of him who lends on all things. Thank you, sir;
Plato and I will thank you.

3*d Cred.* Crazed, poor scholar!
I'll take my little one from school this day!

Scene II.

Aram. Rogues thrive in ease, and fools grow rich
with toil;
Wealth's wanton eye on Wisdom coldly dwells,
And turns to dote upon the green youth Folly—
And Folly wastes a life, and wins at last
The harlot's false embrace! O, life! poor life!
With what a constant and soul-lavish love
We cling to thee—though misery and gaunt want
Have made thee hideous to all other eyes
But his who wears thee!—let each charm be fled,
We gorge not less on the unslaked desire;—
Making our bliss in what sense sees our curse.
To die: ay, there's the cure—the plashing stream
That girds these walls—the drug of the dank weeds
That rot the air below; these hoard the balm
For broken, pining, and indignant hearts.
But the witch Hope forbids me to be wise;
And when I turn to these—Wo's only friends (*pointing
to his books*)—
And with their weïrd and eloquent voices calm
The stir and Babel of this world within,
I can but dream that my vexed years at last
Shall find the quiet of a hermit's cell,
And far from men's rude malice or low scorn,
Beneath the lov'd gaze of the lambent stars,
And with the hollow rocks, and sparry caves,
And mystic waves, and music-murmuring winds—
My oracles and co-mates—watch my life
Glide down the stream of knowledge, and behold
Its waters with a musing stillness glass
The smiles of Nature and the eyes of Heaven!

Scene III.

Enter Boteler, *slowly watching him; as he remains silent and in thought,* Boteler *touches him on the shoulder.*

Boteler. How now! what! gloomy? and the day so bright!
Why, the old dog that guards the court below
Hath crept from out his wooden den, and shakes
His gray hide in the fresh and merry air;
He changed the sullen and rebuking note
Of jealous wrath, with which he wont to greet me,
Into a voice of welcome as I passed.
Come, rouse thee, Aram; let us forth.
Aram. Nay, friend,
My spirit lackeys not the moody skies,
Nor changes—bright or darkling—with their change.
Farewell, good neighbour; I must work this day;—
Behold my tools—and scholars toil alone!
Boteler. Tush! a few minutes wasted upon me
May well be spared from this long summer day.
Hast heard the news? Monson—thou'st known the man?
Aram. I do remember. *He was poor.* I knew him.
Boteler. But he is poor no more. The all-changing wheel
Rolled round, and scattered riches on his hearth.
A man he never saw,—scarce heard his name,—
But who, some lustrums since, derived his birth
From the same stock, hath died in some far land
Beneath the tropic, and hath left his heir
In our good neighbour. Why, you seem not glad;
Does it not please you?
Aram. Yes.
Boteler. And so it should;

'Tis a poor fool, but honest. Had dame Fate
Done this for you—for me ;—'tis true our brains
Had taught us better how to spend the dross ;
But earth hath worse men than our neighbour.
Aram. Ay,
'Tis true, our art had given more noble wings
To the dull metal.
Boteler. Yes, what glowing smiles
From the rich lip of beauty I had bought :
Women and wine—*they* are the gems of life !
Would I were rich !
Aram. Are these thy low ambition ?
Would *I* were rich, too ;—but for other aims.
Oh ! what a glorious and time-hallowed world
Would I invoke around me ; and wall in
A haunted solitude with those bright souls,
That, with a still and warning aspect, gaze
Upon us from the hallowing shroud of books !
By heaven, there should not be a seer who left
The world one doctrine, but I'd task his lore,
And commune with his spirit ! All the truths
Of all the tongues of earth—I'd have them *all*,
Had I the golden spell to raise their ghosts !
I'd build me domes, too ; from whose giddy height
My soul could watch the night-stars, and unsphere
The destinies of man, or track the ways
Of God from world to world ; pursue the winds,
The clouds that womb the thunder—to their home ;
Invoke and conquer Nature—share her throng
On earth, and ocean, and the chainless air ;
And on the Titan fabrics of old truths
Raise the bold spirit to a height with heaven !
Would—would my life might boast one year of wealth,
Though death should bound it !
Boteler. Thou mayst have thy
wish !

Aram (*wrapt, and abstractedly*). Who spoke? Methought I heard my genius say—
My evil genius—"Thou mayst have thy wish."

Boteler (*touching him*). Thou heard'st aright! Monson this eve will pass
By Nid's swift wave; he bears his gold with him;
The spot is lone—untenanted—remote;
And if thou hast but courage—one bold deed,
And one short moment—thou art poor no more.

Aram (*after a pause, turning his eyes slowly on Boteler*). Boteler, was that thy voice?

Boteler. How couldst thou doubt it?

Aram. Methought its tone seem'd changed; and now methinks,
Now, that I look upon thy face, my eyes
Discover not its old, familiar aspect.
Thou'rt very sure thy name is Boteler?

Boteler. Pshaw,
Thou'rt dreaming still;—awake, and let thy mind
And heart drink all I breathe into thy ear.
I know thee, Aram, for a man humane,
Gentle, and musing; but withal of stuff
That might have made a warrior; and desires,
Though of a different channel from my own,
As high, and hard to limit. Care and want
Have made thee—what they made thy friend long since.
And when I wound my heart to a resolve
Dangerous, but fraught with profit, I did fix
On thee as one whom Fate and Nature made
A worthy partner in the nameless deed.

Aram. Go on. I pray thee pause not.

Boteler. There remain
Few words to body forth my full design.
Know that—at my advice—this eve the gull'd
And credulous fool of Fortune quits his home.
Say but one word, and thou shalt share with me
The gold he bears about him.

Aram. At what price?
Boteler. A little courage.
Aram. And my soul!—No more.
I see your project—
Boteler. And embrace it?
Aram. Lo!
How many deathful, dread, and ghastly snares
Encompass him whom the stark Hunger gnaws.
And the grim demon Penury shuts from out
The golden Eden of his bright desires!
To-day, I thought to slay myself, and die,
No single hope once won!—and now I hear
Dark words of blood, and quail not, nor recoil.—
'Tis but a death in either case;—or mine
Or that poor dotard's!—And the guilt!—the guilt,—
Why, *what* is guilt?—A word! We are the tools,
From birth to death, of destiny; and shaped,
For sin or virtue, by the iron force
Of the unseen, but unresisted, hands
Of Fate, the august compeller of the world.
Boteler. It works. Behold the devil at all hearts!
I am a soldier, and inured to blood;
But *he* hath lived with moralists, forsooth.
And yet one word to tempt him, and one sting
Of the food-craving clay, and the meek sage
Grasps at the crime he marvelled at before.
Aram (*abruptly*). Thou hast broke thy fast this morning?
Boteler. Ay, in truth.
Aram. But *I* have not, since *yester*morn, and asked
In the belief that certain thoughts unwont
To blacken the still mirror of my mind
Might be the phantoms of the hungered flesh
And the faint nature. I was wrong; since you
Share the same thoughts, nor suffer the same ills.
Boteler. Indeed I knew not this. Come to my roof;

'Tis poor, but not so bare as to deny
A soldier's viands to a scholar's wants.
Come, and we'll talk this over. I perceive
That your bold heart already is prepared,
And the details alone remain.—Come, friend,
Lean upon me, for you seem weak: the air
Will breathe this languor into health.

Aram. Your hearth
Is widowed,—we shall be alone?

Boteler. Alone.

Aram. Come, then;—the private way. We'll shun the crowd:
I do not love the insolent eyes of men.

Scene IV.

(*Night—a wild and gloomy Forest—the River at a distance.*)

Enter Aram *slowly.*

Aram. Were it but done, methinks 'twould scarce bequeath
Much food for that dull hypocrite, Remorse.
'Tis a fool less on earth!—a clod—a grain
From the o'er-rich creation;—be it so.
But I, in one brief year, could give to men
More solid, glorious, undecaying good
Than his whole life could purchase:—yet without
The pitiful and niggard dross *he* wastes,
And *I* for lacking starve, my power is naught,
And the whole good undone! Where then the crime,
Though by dread means, to compass that bright end?
And yet—and yet—I falter, and my flesh
Creeps, and the horror of a ghastly thought
Makes stiff my hair,—my blood is cold,—my knees
Do smite each other,—and throughout my frame
Stern manhood melts away. Blow forth, sweet air,

Brace the mute nerves,—release the gathering ice
That curdles up my veins,—call forth the soul,
That, with a steady and unfailing front,
Hath looked on want—and wo—and early death—
And walked with thee, sweet air, upon thy course
Away from earth through the rejoicing heaven!
Who moves?—Speak—speak;—who art thou?

Scene V.

Enter Boteler.

Boteler. Murdoch Boteler!
Hast thou forestall'd me? Come, this bodeth well:
It speaks thy courage, Aram.
Aram. Rather say
The restless fever that doth spur us on
From a dark thought unto a darker deed.
Boteler. He should have come ere this.
Aram. I pray thee, Boteler,
Is it not told of some great painter—whom
Rome bore, and earth yet worships—that he slew
A man—a brother man—and without ire,
But with cool heart and hand, that he might fix
His gaze upon the wretch's dying pangs;
And by them learn what mortal throes to paint
On the wrung features of a suffering god?
Boteler. Ay, I have heard the tale.
Aram. And *he* is honoured.
Men vaunt his glory,—but forget his guilt.
They see the triumph; nor, with wolfish tongues,
Feed on the deed from which the triumph grew.
Is it not so?
Boteler. Thou triflest: this is no hour
For the light legends of a gossip's lore—
Aram. Peace, man. I did but question of the fact.
Enough.—I marvel why our victim lingers?

Boteler. Hush: dost thou hear no footstep?—Ha, he comes!
I see him by yon pine-trees. Look, he smiles;
Smiles as he walks, and sings—

Aram. Alas! poor fool!
So sport we all, while over us the pall
Hangs, and Fate's viewless hands prepare our shroud.

SCENE VI.

Enter MONSON.

Monson. Ye have not waited, sirs?

Boteler. Nay, name it not.

Monson. The nights are long and bright: an hour the less
Makes little discount from the time.

Aram. *An hour!*
What deeds an hour may witness!

Monson. It is true.
(*To Boteler*)—Doth he upbraid?—he has a gloomy brow:
I like him not.

Boteler. The husk hides goodly fruit.
'Tis a deep scholar, Monson; and the gloom
Is not of malice,—but of learned thought.

Monson. Say'st thou?—I love a scholar. Let us on:
We will not travel far to-night?

Aram. *Not far!*

Boteler. Why, as our limbs avail;—thou hast the gold?

Monson. Ay; and my wife suspects not (*laughing*).

Boteler. Come, that's well.
I'm an old soldier, Monson, and I love
This baffling of the Church's cankering ties.
We'll find thee other wives, my friend!—Who holds
The golden lure shall have no lack of loves.

Monson. Ha! ha!—both wise and merry.—(*To Aram*)—Come, sir, on.

Aram. I follow.

(*Aside*)— Can men sin thus in a dream?

SCENE VII.

(*Scene changes to a different part of the Forest—a cave, overhung with firs, and other trees—the Moon is at her full, but clouds are rolling swiftly over her disk—* ARAM *rushes from the cavern—his hands bloody—a knife in his right hand.*)

Aram. 'Tis done—thank Heaven—'tis done!—We've laid his corpse
In a safe niche,—where but the blinded bat
And the red earthworm visit:—it is done!
And we are safe,—and wealthy!—'Twas my hand
That struck the first,—and he cried, "Boteler, help!"
And lifted up his arms. *I* struck no more!
Oh, God!—*I* did not slay him!—'twas not *I!*
I did but wound him!—and this blood—this blood—
Was not the last and precious tide that gushed
From life's own well when that grim soldier smote him.

(*Enter* BOTELER *more slowly from the cave, and looking round.*)

Boteler. Why didst thou leave me ere our task was o'er?

Aram. Was he not dead, then?—did he breathe again?
Or cry, "Help, Boteler?"—Mark, *I* struck but once!

Boteler. Dead!—Ere we bore him to the cave, our knives
Had done full well what Hell cannot undo.
But the gold, Aram! thou didst leave the gold?

Aram. The gold! I had forgot. *Thou* hast the gold.
Come, let us share, and part—

Boteler. Not here; the spot
Is open, and the rolling moon may light
Some wanderer's footsteps hither. To the deeps
Which the stars pierce not—of the naked wood—
We will withdraw and share;—and weave our plans,
So that the world may know not of this deed.

Aram. Thou say'st right. Methinks *I* smote but once.
Ay, ay; but once—'tis sure. Come, friend; this way.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

(*Time, Ten Years after the date of the first Act.*)

Scene I.

Peasants dancing—A beautiful Wood Scene—A Cottage in the front.

Madeline—Lambourn—Michael.

(Lambourn *comes forward.*)

Come, my sweet Madeline, though our fate denies
The pomp by which the great and wealthy mark
The white days of their lot, at least thy sire
Can light with joyous faces and glad hearts
The annual morn which brought so fair a boon,
And blessed his rude hearth with a child like thee.

Madeline. My father, my dear father, since that morn
The sun hath called from out the depth of time
The shapes of twenty summers; and no hour
That did not own to Heaven thy love—thy care!

Lambourn. Thou hast repaid me; and my old eyes swim
With tears that tell thy virtues, my sweet child;
For ever from thy cradle thou wert filled
With meek and gentle thought; thy step was soft,
And thy voice tender, and within thine eyes,
And on thy cloudless brow, lay deeply glassed
The quiet and the beauty of thy soul.
As thou didst grow in years, the love and power
Of nature waxed upon thee, thou wouldst pore
On the sweet stillness of the summer hills,
Or the hush'd face of waters, as a book

Where God had written beauty; and in turn
Books grew to thee, as Nature's page had grown,
And study and lone musing nursed thy youth.
Yet wert thou ever woman in thy mood,
And soft, though serious; nor in abstract thought
Lost household zeal, or the meek cares of love.
Bless thee, my child. (*Kisses her forehead.*) Methinks one lives whose skill
Might chase the *paler* rose from that pure cheek,
And the vague sadness from those loving eyes.
Nay, turn not, Madeline, for I know, in truth,
No man to whom I would so freely give
Thy hand as his—no man so full of wisdom,
And yet so gentle in his bearing of it;
No man so kindly in his thoughts of others—
So rigid of all virtues in himself;
No man more suited to respond and feel
Within the graces that he loves in thee,
As this same learned wonder, Eugene Aram.

Madeline. In sooth his name sounds lovelier for thy praise;
Would he were by to hear it, for methinks
His nature given too much to saddening thought,
And words like yours would cheer it. Oft he starts
And mutters to himself, and folds his arms,
And traces with keen eyes the empty air;
Then shakes his head, and smiles—no happy smile!

Lambourn. It is the way with students, for they live
In an ideal world, and group this earth
With that world's images, until at last
The nothings ripen to a voice and shape;
But thou wilt cure him, love, and chase away
The mind's dull visions with thy living truth.
But the noon wanes, and yet he does not come.
Neighbours, hath any 'mong you seen this day
The scholar Aram?

Michael. By the hoary oak
That overhangs the brook, I marked this morn
A bending figure, motionless and lonely.
I neared it, but it heard—it saw me—not;
It spoke—I listened—and it said, "Ye leaves,
That from the old and changeful branches fall
Upon the waters, and are borne away
Whither none know, ye are men's worthless lives;
Nor boots it whether ye drop off by time,
Or the rude anger of some violent wind
Scatter ye ere your hour. Amid the mass
Of your green life, who misses one lost leaf?"
He said no more; then I did come beside
The speaker: it was Aram.
Madeline (aside). Ah! this mood!
Would I could smile it with my love away!
Michael. But he seemed galled and sore at my approach;
And when I told that I was hither bound,
And asked if aught I should convey from him,
He frowned, and coldly turning on his heel,
Answered—that "he should meet me." I was pained
To think that I had vexed so good a man.
1st Neighbour. Ay, he is good as wise.
All men love Aram.
2d Neighbour. And with what justice! My old dame's complaint
Had baffled all the leeches; but his art,
From a few simple herbs, distilled a spirit
Has made her young again.
3d Neighbour. By his advice,
And foresight of the seasons, I did till
My land, and now my granaries scarce can hold
Their golden wealth; while those who mocked his words
Can scarcely from hard earth and treacherous air
Win aught to keep the wolf from off their door.

Michael. And while he stoops to what poor men should know,
They say that in the deep and secret lore
That scholars mostly prize, he hath no peer.
Old men, who pale and care-begone have lived
A life amid their books, will, at his name,
Lift up their hands, and cry, " The wondrous man !"

Lambourn. His birth-place must thank fortune for the fame
That he one day will win it.

Michael. Dost thou know
Whence Aram came ere to these hamlet scenes
Ten summers since he wandered?

Lambourn. Michael, no!
'Twas from some distant nook of our fair isle.
But he so sadly flies from what hath chanced
In his more youthful life, and there would seem
So much of winter in those April days,
That I have shunned vain question of the past.
Thus much I learn: he hath no kin alive;
No parent to exult in such a son.

Michael. Poor soul! You spake of sadness. Know you aught
Of what it comes?

Lambourn. Why, scarcely; but methinks
He hath been tried—not lightly—by the sharp
And everlasting curse to learning doomed,
That which poor labour bears without a sigh,
But whose mere breath can harrow genius—Want
Want—the harsh, hoary beldame—the obscene
Witch that hath power o'er brave men's thews and nerves,
And lifts the mind from out itself.

Michael. Why think you
That he hath been thus crossed? His means appear
Enough, at least for his subdued desires.

Lambourn. I'll tell thee wherefore. Do but speak of want,

And lo! he winces, and his nether lip
Quivers impatient, and he sighs, and frowns,
And mutters, "Hunger is a fearful thing;
And it is terrible that man's high soul
Should be made barren in its purest aims
By the mere lack of the earth's yellow clay."
Then will he pause—and pause—and come at last
And put some petty moneys in my hand,
And cry, "Go, feed the wretch; he must not starve,
Or he will sin. Men's throats are scarcely safe
While Hunger prowls beside them!"

Michael. The kind man!
But this comes only from a *gentle* heart,
Not from a *tried* one.

Lambourn. Nay, not wholly so;
For I have heard him, as he turned away,
Mutter in stifled tones, "No man can tell
What want is in his brother man, unless
Want's self hath taught him, as the fiend taught me!"

Michael. And hath he ne'er enlarged upon these words,
Nor lit them into clearer knowledge by
A more pronounced detail?

Lambourn. No; nor have
Sought to dig forth truth's root. In my young days
I passed much time amid the scholar race,
The learned lamps which light the unpitying world
By their own self-consuming. They are proud—
A proud and jealous tribe—and proud men loathe
To speak of former sufferings; least of all
Want's suffering, in the which the bitterest sting
Is in the humiliation; therefore I
Cover the past with silence. But whate'er
His origin or early fate, there lives
None whom I hold more dearly, or to whom
My hopes so well could trust my Madeline's lot.

Scene II.

(The crowd at the back of the Stage gives way—**Aram** *slowly enters—The Neighbours greet him with respect, several appear to thank him for various benefits or charities—He returns the greeting in dumb show, with great appearance of modesty.)*

Aram. Nay, nay, good neighbours, ye do make me blush
To think that to so large a store of praise
There goes so poor desert.—My Madeline!—Sweet,'
I see thee, and air brightens!

Lambourn. You are late—
But not less welcome. On my daughter's birthday,
You scarce should be the last to wish her joy.

Aram. Joy—joy!—Is life so poor and harsh a boon,
That we should hail each year that wears its gloss
And glory into winter? Shall we crown
With roses Time's bald temples, and rejoice—
For what?—that we are hastening to the grave?
No, no!—I cannot look on thy young brow,
Beautiful Madeline! nor, upon the day
Which makes thee one year nearer unto Heaven,
Feel sad for Earth, whose very soul thou art;—
Or art, at least, to me!—for wert thou not,
Earth would be dead and withered as the clay
Of her own offspring when the breath departs.

Lambourn. I scarce had thought a scholar's dusty tomes
Could teach his lips the golden ways to woo.
Howbeit, in all times, man never learns
To love, nor learns to flatter.
Well, my friends,
Will ye within?—our simple fare invites.
Aram, when thou hast made thy peace with Madeline,

We shall be glad to welcome thee.—(*To Michael*) This
··. love
Is a most rigid faster, and would come
To a quick ending in an epicure.
[*Exeunt Lambourn, the Neighbours, &c.*

SCENE III.

MADELINE *and* ARAM.

Madeline. My heart finds accents now we are alone!
It feeds upon itself, and fears to speak,
When curious throngs are round us. Thou hast coined
All feelings into one,—all thoughts, all words
(Which are the garb of thought) into one language,
That were profaned if spoke amid the world.
Aram. Beloved! would our life could—like a brook
Watering a desert—glide unseen away,
Murmuring our own heart's music—which is love,
And glassing only heaven—which is love's life!
I am not made to live among mankind;
They stir dark memory from unwilling sleep,
And—but no matter. Madeline, it is strange
That one like thee, for whom, methinks, fair Love
Should wear its bravest and most gallant garb,
Should e'er have cast her heart's rich freight upon
A thing like me,—not fashion'd in the mould
Which wins a maiden's eye,—austere of life,
And grave and sad of bearing,—and so long
Inured to solitude as to have grown
A man that hath the shape, but not the soul,
Of the world's inmates.
Madeline. 'Tis for that I loved:
The world I love not—therefore I love *thee!*
Come, shall I tell thee,—'tis an oft-told tale,
Yet never wearies,—by what bright degrees
Thy empire rose, till it o'erspread my soul,

And made my all of being love? Thou knowest
When first thou camest into these lone retreats,
My years yet dwelt in childhood; but my thoughts
Went deeper than my co-mates'. Books I loved,
But not the books that woo a woman's heart;—
I loved not tales of war and stern emprise,
And man let loose on man—dark deeds, of which
The name was glory, but the nature crime,—
Nor themes of vulgar love—of maidens' hearts
Won by small worth, set off by gaudy show;—
Those tales, which win the wilder hearts, in me
Did move some anger, and a world of scorn.
All that I dreamed of sympathy was given
Unto the lords of Mind—the victor chiefs
Of Wisdom—or of Wisdom's music—Song;
And as I read of them, I dreamed, and drew,
In my soul's colours, shapes my soul might love,
And loving, worship,—they were like to thee!
Thou camest unknown, and lonely,—and around
Thy coming, and thy bearing, and thy mood
Hung mystery,—and, in guessing at its clew,
Mystery grew interest, and the interest love!

Aram (aside). O woman! how from that which she should shun,
Does the poor trifler draw what charms her most!

Madeline. Then, as Time won thee frequent to our hearth,
Thou from thy learning's height didst stoop to teach me
Nature's more gentle secrets—the sweet lore
Of the green herb and the bee-worshipped flower;
And when the night did o'er this nether earth
Distil meek quiet, and the heart of heaven
With love grew breathless, thou wert wont to raise
My wild thoughts to the weïrd and solemn stars;
Tell of each orb the courses and the name;
And of the winds, the clouds, th' invisible air,
Make eloquent discourse;—until methought

No human life, but some diviner spirit,
Alone could preach such truths of things divine.
And so—and so—

Aram. From heaven we turned to earth,
And Thought did father Passion!—Gentlest love!
If thou couldst know how hard it is for one
Who takes such feeble pleasure in this world
To worship aught earth-*born*, thou'dst learn how wild
The wonder of my passion and thy power.
But ere three days are past thou wilt be mine!
And mine for ever! Oh, delicious thought!
How glorious were the future, could I shut
The past—the past—from—Ha! what stirred?—didst hear,
Madeline? didst hear?

Madeline. Hear what?—the very air
Lies quiet as an infant in its sleep.

Aram (looking round). Methought I heard—

Madeline. What, love?

Aram. It was a cheat
Of these poor fools, the senses. Come, thy hand;
I love to feel thy touch, thou art so pure—
So soft—so sacred in thy loveliness,
That I feel safe with thee! Great God himself
Would shun to launch upon the brow of guilt
His bolt while thou wert by!

Madeline. Alas, alas!
Why dost thou talk of guilt?

Aram. Did I, sweet love—
Did I say guilt?—it is an ugly word.
Why, sweet, indeed—did I say guilt, my Madeline?

Madeline. In truth you did. Your hand is dry—the pulse
Beats quick and fevered: you consume too much
Of life in thought—you over-rack the nerves—
And thus a shadow bids them quail and tremble.
But when I queen it, Eugene, o'er your home,
I'll see this fault amended.

Aram. Ay, thou shalt,
In sooth thou shalt.

Scene IV.

Enter Michael.

Michael. Friend Lambourn sends his greeting,
And prays you to his simple banquet.
Madeline. Come!
His raciest wine will in my father's cup
Seem dim, till you can pledge him. Eugene, come.
Aram. And if I linger o'er the draught, sweet love,
Thou'lt know I do but linger o'er the wish
For thee, which sheds its blessing on the bowl.

Scene V.

(*Sunset—A Wood-scene—A Cottage at a distance—In the foreground a Woodman felling wood.*)

Enter Aram.

Wise men have praised the peasant's thoughtless lot,
And learned pride hath envied humble toil:
If they were right, why, let us burn our books,
And sit us down, and play the fool with Time,
Mocking the prophet Wisdom's grave decrees,
And walling this trite PRESENT with dark clouds,
Till night becomes our nature, and the ray
Ev'n of the stars, but meteors that withdraw
The wandering spirit from the sluggish rest
Which makes its proper bliss. I will accost
This denizen of toil, who with hard hands,
Prolongs from day to day unthinking life,
And ask if *he* be happy.—Friend, good eve.
Woodman. 'Tis the great scholar!—Worthy sir, good eve.

Aram. Thou seem'st o'erworn: through this long summer day
Hast thou been labouring in the lonely glen?

Woodman. Ay, save one hour at noon. 'Tis weary work;
But men like me, good sir, must not repine
At work which feeds the craving mouths at home.

Aram. Then thou art happy, friend, and with content
Thy life hath made a compact. Is it so?

Woodman. Why, as to that, sir, I must surely feel
Some pangs when I behold the ease with which
The wealthy live; while I, through heat and cold,
Can scarcely conquer Famine.

Aram. * * * * * *

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*** In this scene, Boteler (the Houseman of the Novel) is again introduced.

END OF EUGENE ARAM.

ARASMANES;

OR,

THE SEEKER.

ARASMANES;

THE SEEKER.

CHAPTER I.

LEGACY OF A DYING SAGE.

In the broad plains of Chaldæa, and not the least illustrious of those shepherd-sages from whom came our first learning of the lights of heaven, the venerable Chosphor saw his age decline into the grave. Upon his death-bed he thus addressed his only son, the young Arasmanes—in whose piety he recognised, even in that gloomy hour, a consolation and a blessing; and for whose growing renown for wisdom and for valour the faint pulses of expiring life yet beat with paternal pride.

"Arasmanes," said he, "I am about to impart to you the only secret which, after devoting eighty years to unravel the many mysteries of knowledge, I consider worthy of transmitting to my child. Thou knowest that I have wandered over the distant regions of the world, and have experienced, with all the vicissitudes, some of the triumphs, and many of the pleasures, of life. Learn from my experience, that earth possesses nothing which can reward the pursuit, or satisfy the desire. When you see the stars shining down upon

the waters, you behold an image of the visionary splendours of hope: the light sparkles on the wave; but it neither warms while it glitters, nor can it, for a single instant, arrest the progress of the stream from the dark gulf into which it hastens to merge itself and be lost. It was not till my old age that this conviction grew upon my mind; and, about that time, I discovered, from one of the sacred books to which my studies were then applied, the secret I am now about to confide to thy ear. Know, my son, that in the extremities of Asia there is a garden in which the God of the Universe placed the first parents of mankind. In that garden the sun never sets; nor does the beauty of the season wane. *There* is neither ambition, nor avarice, nor false hope, nor its child, regret. *There* is neither age nor infirmity; diseases are banished from the air; eternal youth, and the serenity of unbroken happiness, are the prerogative of all things that breathe therein. For a mystic and unknown sin our first parents were banished from this happy clime, and their children scattered over the earth. Superhuman beings are placed at its portals, and clouds and darkness veil it from the eyes of ordinary men. But, to the virtuous and to the bold, there is no banishment from the presence of God; and by them the darkness may be penetrated, the dread guardians softened, and the portals of the divine land be passed. Thither, then, my son—early persuaded that the rest of earth is paved with sorrow and with care—thither, then, bend thy adventurous way. Fain could I have wished that, in my stronger manhood, when my limbs could have served my will, I had learned this holy secret, and repaired in search of the ancestral clime. Avail thyself of my knowledge; and, in thy happiness, I shall die contented." The pious son pressed the hand of his sire, and promised obedience to his last command.

"But, oh, my father!" said he, "how shall I know in what direction to steer my course? To this land who-

shall be my guide, or what my clew? Can ship built by mortal hands anchor at its coast; or can we say to the camel-driver, 'Thou art approaching the goal!'"

The old man pointed to the east.

"From the east," said he, "dawns the sun—type of the progress of the mind's light: from the east comes all of science that we know. Born in its sultry regions, seek only to pierce to its extreme; and, guiding thyself by the stars of heaven ever in one course, reach at last the Aden that shall reward thy toils."

And Chosphor died, and was buried with his fathers.

After a short interval of mourning, Arasmanes took leave of his friends; and, turning his footsteps to the east, sought the gates of Paradise.

He travelled far and alone, for several weeks; and the stars were his only guides.

By degrees, as he progressed, he found that the existence of Aden was more and more acknowledged. Accustomed from his boyhood to the companionship of sages, it was their abodes that he sought in each town or encampment through which the wanderer passed. By them his ardour was confirmed; for they all agreed in the dim and remote tradition of some beautiful region in the farthest east, from which the existing races of the earth were banished, and which was jealously guarded from profane approach by the wings of the spirits of God. But if he communicated to any one his daring design, he had the mortification to meet only the smile of derision, or the incredulous gaze of wonder: by some he was thought a madman, and by others an impostor. So that, at last, he prudently refrained from revealing his intentions, and contented himself with seeking the knowledge, and listening to the conjectures, of others.

CHAPTER II.

THE PARADISE OF YOUTH.

At length the traveller emerged from a mighty forest, through which, for several days, he had threaded his weary way; and beautiful beyond thought was the landscape that broke upon his view. A plain covered with the richest verdure lay before him; through the trees that here and there darkened over the emerald ground, were cut alleys, above which arched festoons of many-coloured flowers, whose hues sparkled amid the glossy foliage, and whose sweets steeped the air as with a bath. A stream, clear as crystal, flowed over golden sands; and, wherever the sward was greenest, gathered itself into delicious fountains, and sent upward its dazzling spray, as if to catch the embraces of the sun, whose beams kissed it in delight.

The wanderer paused in ecstasy; a sense of luxurious rapture which he had never before experienced crept into his soul. "Behold!" murmured he, "my task is already done; and Aden, the land of happiness and of youth, lies before me!"

While he thus spake, a sweet voice answered—"Yes, O happy stranger!—thy task is done: this is the land of happiness and of youth!"

He turned, and a maiden of dazzling beauty was by his side. "Enjoy the present," said she, "and so wilt thou defy the future. Ere yet the world was, Love brooded over the unformed shell, till from beneath the shadow of his wings burst forth the life of the young creation. Love, then, is the true God, and whoso

serveth him he admits into the mysteries of a temple erected before the stars. Behold! thou enterest now upon the threshold of the temple; thou art in the land of happiness and youth!"

Enchanted with these words, Arasmanes gave himself up to the sweet intoxication they produced upon his soul. He suffered the nymph to lead him deeper into the valley; and now, from a thousand vistas in the wood, trooped forth beings, some of fantastic, some of the most harmonious shapes. There was the satyr and the faun, and the youthful Bacchus—mixed with the multiform deities of India, and the wild objects of Egyptian worship; but more numerous than all were the choral nymphs, that spiritualized the reality, by incorporating the dreams, of beauty; and, wherever he looked, one laughing face seemed to peer forth from the glossy leaves, and to shed, as from its own joyous, yet tender aspect, a tenderness and a joy over all things; and he asked how this being, that seemed to have the power of multiplying itself everywhere, was called? And its name was Eros.

For a time, the length of which he knew not—for in that land no measurement of time was kept—Arasmanes was fully persuaded that it was Aden to which he had attained. He felt his youth as if it were something palpable; every thing was new to him—even in the shape of the leaves, and the whisper of the odorous airs, he found wherewithal to marvel at and admire. Enamoured of the maiden that had first addressed him, at her slightest wish (and she was full of all beautiful caprices), he was ready to explore even the obscurest recess in the valley, which now appeared to him unbounded. He never wearied of a single hour. He felt as if weariness were impossible; and, with every instant, he repeated to himself, "In the land of happiness and youth I am a dweller."

One day, as he was conversing with his beloved, and

gazing upon her face, he was amazed to behold that, since the last time he had gazed upon it, a wrinkle had planted itself upon the ivory surface of her brow; and, even while half doubting the evidence of his eyes, new wrinkles seemed slowly to form over the forehead, and the transparent roses of her cheek to wane and fade! He concealed, as well as he could, the mortification and wonder that he experienced at this strange phenomenon; and no longer daring to gaze upon a face from which before he had drank delight as from a fountain, he sought excuses to separate himself from her, and wandered confused, and bewildered with his own thoughts, into the wood. The fauns, and the dryads, and the youthful face of Bacchus, and the laughing aspect of Eros, came athwart him from time to time; yet the wonder that had clothed them with fascination was dulled within his breast. Nay, he thought the poor wine-god had a certain vulgarity in his air, and he almost yawned audibly in the face of Eros.

And now, whenever he met his favourite nymph—who was as the queen of the valley—he had the chagrin to perceive that the wrinkles deepened with every time; youth seemed rapidly to desert her; and, instead of a maiden scarcely escaped from childhood, it was an old coquet that he had been so desperately in love with.

One day he could not resist saying to her, though with some embarrassment—

"Pray, dearest, is it many years that you have inhabited this valley?"

"Oh, indeed, many!" said she, smiling.

"You are not, then, very young," rejoined Arasmanes, ungallantly.

"What!" cried the nymph, changing colour—"Do you begin to discover age in my countenance? Has any wrinkle yet appeared upon my brow? You are silent. Oh, cruel Fate! will you not spare even this lover?" And the poor nymph burst into tears.

"My dear love," said Arasmanes, painfully, "it is true that time begins to creep upon you; but my friendship shall be eternal."

Scarcely had he uttered these words when the nymph, rising, fixed upon him a long, sorrowful look, and then with a loud cry vanished from his sight. Thick darkness, as a veil, fell over the plains; the novelty of life, with its attendant, poetry, was gone from the wanderer's path for ever.

A sudden sleep crept over his senses. He awoke confused and unrefreshed, and a long and gradual ascent, but over mountains green indeed, and watered by many streams gushing from the heights, stretched before him. Of the valley he had mistaken for Aden not a vestige remained. He was once more on the real and solid earth.

CHAPTER III

THE OLD MAN IN THE DESERT.

For several days, discontented and unhappy, the young adventurer pursued his course, still seeking only the east, and still endeavouring to console himself for the sweet delusions of the past, by hoping an Aden in the future.

The evening was still and clear; the twilight star broke forth over those giant plains—free from the culture and the homes of men, which yet make the character of the eastern and early world; a narrow stream, emerging from a fissure in a small rock covered with moss, sparkled forth under the light of the solemn heavens, and flowed far away, till lost among the gloom of

a mighty forest of palms. By the source of this stream sat an aged man and a young female. And the old man was pouring into his daughter's ear—for Azraaph held to Ochtor that holy relationship—the first doctrines of the world's wisdom; those wild but lofty conjectures by which philosophy penetrated into the nature and attributes of God; and reverently the young maiden listened, and meekly shone down the star of eve upon the dark yet lustrous beauty of her earnest countenance.

It was at this moment that a stranger was seen descending from the hills that bordered the mighty plains; and he, too, worn and tired with long travel, came to the stream to refresh his burning thirst, and lave the dust from his brow.

He was not at first aware of the presence of the old man and the maiden; for they were half concealed beneath the shadow of the rock from which the stream flowed. But the old man, who was one of those early hermits with whom wisdom was the child of solitude, and who, weary with a warring and savage world, had long since retired to a cavern not far from the source of that stream, and dwelt apart with Nature—the memories of a troubled past, and the contemplation of a mysterious future,—the old man, I say, accustomed to proffer to the few wanderers that from time to time descended the hills (seeking the cities of the east) the hospitality of food and shelter, was the first to break the silence.

Arasmanes accepted with thankfulness the offer of the hermit, and that night he became Ochtor's guest. There were many chambers in the cavern, hollowed either by the hand of nature, or by some early hunters on the hill; and into one of these the old man, after the Chaldæan had refreshed himself with the simple viands of the hermitage, conducted the wanderer: it was covered with dried and fragrant mosses; and the sleep

of Arasmanes was long, and he dreamed many cheerful dreams.

When he rose the next morning, he found his entertainers were not within the cavern. He looked forth, and beheld them once more by the source of the stream, on which the morning sun shone, and round which fluttered the happy wings of the desert birds. The wanderer sought his hosts in a spot on which they were accustomed, morning and eve, to address the Deity. "Thou dost not purpose to leave us soon," said the hermit; "for he who descends from yon mountains must have traversed a toilsome way, and his limbs will require rest."

Arasmanes, gazing on the beauty of Azraaph, answered: "In truth, did I not fear that I should disturb thy reverent meditations, the cool of the plains and the quiet of thy cavern, and more than all thy converse and kind looks, would persuade me, my father, to remain with thee many days."

"Behold how the wandering birds give life and merriment to the silent stream!" said the sage: "and so to the solitary man are the footsteps of his kind." And Arasmanes sojourned with Ochtor, the old man.

CHAPTER IV.

A BRIBE AND A BRIDE.

"THIS then is thy tale," said Ochtor; "and thou still believest in the visionary Aden of thy father's dreams. Doubtless such a land existed once for our happier sires; or why does tradition preserve it to the race that behold it not? But the shadow wraps it, and the angel guards. Waste not thy life in a pursuit, without a clew, for a goal that thou never mayst attain. Lose not the charm of earth in seeking after the joys of Aden. Tarry with us, my son, in these still retreats. This is the real Aden of which thy father spake; for here comes neither passion nor care. The mortifications and the disappointments of earth fall not upon the recluse. Behold, my daughter hath found favour in thine eyes—she loveth thee—she is beautiful and tender of heart. Tarry with us, my son, and forget the lessons that thy sire, weary with a world which he yet never had the courage to quit, gave thee from the false wisdom of Discontent."

"Thou art right, venerable Ochtor," cried Arasmanes, with enthusiasm; "give me but thy daughter, and I will ask for no other Aden than these plains."

CHAPTER V.

REMINISCENCES AND REGRETS.

The sun had six times renewed his course, and Arasmanes still dwelt in the cave of Ochtor. In the fair face of Azraaph he discovered no wrinkles—her innocent love did not pall upon him; the majestic calm of Nature breathed its own tranquillity into his soul, and in the lessons of Ochtor he took a holy delight. He found in his wisdom that which at once stilled the passions and inspired the thoughts. At times, however, and of late more frequently than ever, strong yearnings after the Aden he had so vainly pursued were yet felt. He felt that curse of monotony which is the invariable offspring of quiet.

At the end of the sixth year, as one morning they stood without the door of the cavern, and their herds fed tranquilly around them, a band of men from the western hills came suddenly in view: they were discovered before they had time to consider whether they should conceal themselves; they had no cause, however, for fear—the strangers were desirous only of food and rest.

Foremost of this band was an aged man of majestic mien, and clothed in the richest garments of the east. Loose flowed his purple robe, and bright shone the jewels on the girdle that clasped his sword. As he advanced to accost Ochtor, upon the countenance of each of the old men grew doubt, astonishment, recognition, and joy. "My brother!" burst from the lips of both, and the old chief fell upon Ochtor's bosom and wept aloud. The brothers remained alone the whole day,

and at nightfall they parted with many tears; and Zamielides, the son of the chief (who was with the band), knelt to Ochtor, and Ochtor blessed him.

Now when all were gone, and silence once more slept upon the plains, Ochtor went forth alone, and Azraaph said unto her husband: "My father's mind seems disquieted and sad; go forth, I pray thee, my beloved, and comfort him; the dews lie thick upon the grass, and my father is very old." By the banks of the stream stood Ochtor, and his arms were folded on his breast; the river-horses were snorting in the distance, and the wild zebras came to drink at the wave; and the presence of the beasts made more impressive the solitude of the old man.

"Why art thou disquieted, my father?" said Arasmanes.

"Have I not parted with my near of kin?"

"But thou didst never hope to meet them; and are not thy children left thee?"

Ochtor waved his hand with an unwonted impatience.

"Listen to me, Arasmanes. Know that Zamiel and I were brothers. Young and ardent, each of us aspired to rule our kind, and each of us imagined he had the qualities that secure command; but, mark, my arm was stronger in the field, and my brain was the subtler in the council. We toiled and schemed, and rose into repute among our tribe; but envy was busy with our names. Our herds were seized—we were stripped of our rank—we were degraded to the level of our slaves. Then, disgusted with my race, I left their cities, and in these vast solitudes I forgot ambition in content. But my brother was of more hopeful heart; with a patient brow he veiled the anger he endured. Lo, he hath been rewarded! His hour came—he gathered together his friends in secret—he smote our enemies in the dead of night; and at morning, behold, he was hailed chieftain of the tribe. This night he rides with his son to the

King of the City of Golden Palaces, whose daughter that son is about to wed. Had I not weakly renounced my tribe—had I not fled hither, that glorious destiny would have been mine; I should have been the monarch of my race, and my daughter have matched with kings. Marvellest thou now that I am disquieted, or that my heart is sore within me?"

And Arasmanes saw that the sage had been superior to the world only while he was sickened of the world.

And Ochtor nourished the discontent he had formed to his dying day; and, within three months from that night, Arasmanes buried him by the source of the solitary stream.

CHAPTER VI.

A STRANGE CITY, AND ITS PENAL CODE.

The death of Ochtor, and his previous confession, deeply affected Arasmanes. He woke as from a long sleep. Solitude had lost its spell; and he perceived that inactivity itself may be the parent of remorse. "If," thought he, "so wise, so profound a mind as that of Ochtor, was thus sensible to the memories of ambition—if, on the verge of death, he thus regretted the solitude in which he had buried his years, and felt, upon the first tidings from the great world, that he had wasted the promise and powers of life, how much more accessible should *I* be to such feelings, in the vigour of manhood, and with the one great object which I swore to my father to pursue, unattained, and even unattempted? Surely it becomes me to lose no longer time in these houseless wastes; but to rise and gird up my loins, and

seek, with Azraaph, my wife, for that Aden which we will enter together!"

These thoughts soon ripened into resolve; and not the less soon in that, Ochtor being dead, Arasmanes had now no companion for his loftier and more earnest thoughts. Azraaph was beautiful and gentle; but the moment he began to talk about the stars, she unaffectedly yawned in his face. She was quite contented with the solitude, for she knew of no other world; and the herds, and the streamlet, and every old bush around the cavern, were society to her; but her content, as Arasmanes began to discover, was that of ignorance, and not of wisdom.

Azraaph wept bitterly on leaving the cavern; but by degrees, as they travelled slowly on, the novelty of what they saw reconciled her to change: and, except at night, when she was weary of spirit, she ceased to utter her regrets for the stream and the quiet cave. They travelled eastward for several weeks, and met with no living thing by the way, save a few serpents, and a troop of wild horses. At length, one evening, they found themselves in the suburbs of a splendid city. As they approached the gates they drew back, dazzled with the lustre, for the gates were of burnished gold, which shone bright and glittering as they caught a sunny light from the lamps of naphtha, that hung, frequent, from the mighty walls.

They inquired, as they passed the gates, the name of the city; and they heard, with some surprise, and more joy, that it was termed "The City of Golden Palaces."

"Here, then," cried Azraaph, "we shall be well received; for the son of my father's brother is wedded to the daughter of the king."

"And here, then, will be many sages," thought Arasmanes, "who will, doubtless, have some knowledge of the true situation of Aden."

They were much struck as they proceeded through

the streets, with the bustle, and life, and animation that reigned around, even at that late hour. With the simplicity natural to persons who had lived so long in a desert, they asked at once for the king's palace. The first time Arasmanes asked, it was of a young lord, who, very sumptuously dressed, was treading the streets with great care, lest he should soil the hem of his robe. The young lord looked at him with great surprise, and passed on. The next he asked was a rude boor, who was carrying a bundle of wood on his shoulders. The boor laughed in his face; and Arasmanes, indignant at the insult, struck him to the ground. There then came by a judge, and Arasmanes asked him the same question.

"The king's palace!" said the judge; "and what want ye with the king's palace?"

"Behold, the daughter of the king is married to my wife's cousin."

"Your wife's cousin! Thou art mad to say it; yet stay, thou lookest poor, friend (here the judge frowned terribly). Thy garments are scanty and worn. I fancy thou hast neither silver nor gold."

"Thou sayest right," replied Arasmanes; "I have neither."

"Ho, ho!" quoth the judge, he confesses his guilt; he owns that he has neither silver nor gold. Here, soldiers, seize this man and woman. Away with them to prison; and let them be brought up for sentence of death to-morrow. We will then decide whether they shall be hanged or starved. The wretches have positively neither silver nor gold; and, what is worse, they own it!"

"Is it possible!" cried the crowd; and a shudder of horror crept through every bystander. "Away with them!—away with them! Long life to judge Kaly, whose eye never sleeps, and who preserves us for ever from the poor!"

The judge walked on, shedding tears of virtuous delight at the reputation he had acquired.

Arasmanes and Azraaph were hurried off to prison, where Azraaph cried herself to sleep, and Arasmanes, with folded arms and downcast head, indulged his meditations on the very extraordinary notions of crime that seemed common to the sons of the City of Golden Palaces. They were disturbed the next morning by loud shouts beneath the windows of the prison. Nothing could equal the clamour that they heard; but it seemed the clamour of joy. In fact, that morning, the princess, who had married Azraaph's cousin, had been safely brought to bed of her first child; and great was the joy and the noise throughout the city. Now it was the custom in that country, whenever any one of the royal family was pleased to augment the population of the world, for the father of the child to go round to all the prisons in the city, and release the prisoners. What good fortune for Arasmanes and Azraaph, that the princess had been brought to bed before they were hanged!

And by-and-by, amid cymbal and psalter, with banners above him and spears around, came the young father to the jail in which our unfortunate couple were confined.

"Have you any extraordinary criminals in yout prison?" asked the prince of the head jailer, for he was studying, at that time, to be affable.

"Only one man, my lord, who was committed last night; and who absolutely confessed, in cold blood and without torture, that he had neither silver nor gold. It is a thousand pities that such a miscreant should be suffered to go free!"

"You are right," said the prince; "and what impudence to confess the crime! I should like to see so extraordinary a man."

So saying, the prince dismounted, and followed the jailer to the cell in which Arasmanes and his wife were

confined. They recognised their relation at once; for, in that early age of the world, people in trouble had a wonderfully quick memory in recollecting relatives in power. Azraaph ran to throw herself on the prince's neck (which the guards quickly prevented) and the stately Arasmanes began to utter his manly thanks for the visit.

"These people are mad," cried the prince, hastily. "Release them; but let me escape first." So saying, he ran down the stairs so fast that he nearly broke his neck; and then, mounting his horse, pursued his way to the other prisons, amid the shouts of the people.

Arasmanes and Azraaph were now turned out into the streets. They were exceedingly hungry: and they went into the first baker's shop they saw and asked the rites of hospitality.

"Certainly; but your money, first," said the baker.

Arasmanes, made wise by experience, took care not to reply that he had no money; "but," said he, "I have left it behind me at my lodging. Give me the bread now, and, lo! I will repay thee to-morrow."

"Very well," said the baker; "but that sword of yours has a handsome hilt; leave it with me till you return with the moneys."

So Arasmanes took the bread, and left the sword.

CHAPTER VII.

EVIDENCES OF CIVILIZATION.

THEY were now refreshed, and resolved to leave so dangerous a city as soon as they possibly could, when, just as they turned into a narrow street, they were suddenly seized by six soldiers, blindfolded, gagged, and hurried away, whither they knew not. At last they found themselves ascending a flight of stairs. A few moments more and the bandages were removed from their mouths and eyes, and they saw themselves in a gorgeous chamber, and alone in the presence of the prince, their cousin.

He embraced them tenderly. "Forgive me," said he, "for appearing to forget you: but it was as much as my reputation was worth in this city to acknowledge relations who confessed to have neither silver nor gold. By the beard of my grandfather, how could you be so imprudent? Do you not know that you are in a country in which the people worship only one deity, the god of the precious metals? Not to have the precious metals is not to have virtue; to confess it is to be an atheist. No power could have saved you from death, either by hanging or starvation, if the princess, my wife, had not been luckily brought to bed to-day."

"What a strange—what a barbarous country!" cried Arasmanes.

"Barbarous!" echoed the prince: "this is the most civilized people in the whole world—nay, the whole world acknowledges it. In no country are the people so rich, and therefore so happy. For those who have

no money it is, indeed, a bad place of residence; for those who have, it is the land of happiness itself. Yes, it is the true Aden."

"Aden! What, then, you too have heard of Aden?"

"Surely! and this is it—the land of freedom—of happiness—of gold!" cried the prince, with enthusiasm: "remain with us and see."

"Without doubt," thought Arasmanes, "this country lies in the far east: it has received me inhospitably at first; but perhaps the danger I escaped was but the type and allegorical truth of the sworded angel of which tradition hath spoken. But," said he, aloud, "I have no gold, and no silver, O my prince!"

"Heed not that," answered the kind Zamielides; "I have enough for all. You shall be provided for this very day."

"But will not the people recognise me as the poor stranger?"

The prince laughed for several minutes so loudly that they feared he was going into fits.

"What manner of man art thou, Arasmanes?" said he, when he was composed enough to answer. "Knowest thou not that the people of this city never know what a man has been when he is once rich? Appear to-morrow in purple, and they will never dream that they saw thee yesterday in rags."

CHAPTER VIII.

RELIGION OF THE CITY.

The kind Zamielides, then, conducting his cousins into his own chamber, left them to attire themselves in splendid garments, which he had ordered to be prepared for them. He gave them a palace and large warehouses of merchandise. "Behold," said he, taking Arasmanes to the top of a mighty tower which overlooked the sea: "behold yonder ships that rise, like a forest of masts, from that spacious harbour: the six vessels with the green flags are thine. I will teach thee the mysteries of trade, and thou wilt soon be as wealthy as myself."

"And what is trade, my lord?" said Arasmanes.

"It is the worship that the people of this country pay to their god," answered the prince.

CHAPTER IX.

ANOTHER PARADISE.

Arasmanes was universally courted; so wise, so charming a person had never appeared in the City of Golden Palaces; and as for the beauty of Azraaph, it was declared the very master-piece of nature. Intoxicated with the homage they received, and the splendour

in which they lived, their days glided on in a round of luxurious delight.

"Right art thou, O Zamielides!" cried Arasmanes, as his ships returned laden with new treasure; "the City of Golden Palaces is the true Aden."

CHAPTER X.

DEVOTION, AND CITY LIFE.

Arasmanes had now been three years in the city; and you might perceive that a great change had come over his person: the hues of health had faded from his cheek; his brow was care-worn—his steps slow—his lips compressed. He no longer thought that he lived in the true Aden; and yet for Aden itself he would scarcely have quitted the City of Golden Palaces. Occupied solely with the task of making and spending money, he was consumed with the perpetual fear of losing, and the perpetual anxiety to increase, his stock. He trembled at every darker cloud that swept over the heavens; he turned pale at every ruder billow that agitated the sea. He lived a life of splendid care; and the pleasures which relieved it were wearisome because of their sameness. He saw but little of his once idolized Azraaph. Her pursuits divided her from him. In so civilized a country they could not be always together. If he spoke of his ships, he wearied her to death; if she spoke of the festivals she had adorned, he was equally tired of the account.

CHAPTER XI.

PRICE OF A VICTORY, AND DISINTERESTEDNESS.

The court was plunged in grief. Zamielides was seized with a fever. All the wise men attended him; but he turned his face to the wall and died. Arasmanes mourned for him more sincerely than any one; for, besides that Arasmanes had great cause to be grateful to him, he knew, also, that if any accident happened to his vessels, he had now no friend willing to supply the loss. This made him more anxious than ever about the safety of his wealth. A year after this event, the king of the City of Golden Palaces thought fit to go to war. The war lasted four years; and two millions of men were killed on all sides. The second year Arasmanes was at a splendid banquet given at the court. A messenger arrived, panting and breathless. A great battle at sea had been fought. Ten thousand of the king's subjects had been killed.

"But who won the battle?" cried the king.

"Your majesty."

The air was rent with shouts of joy.

"One little accident only," continued the herald, "happened the next day. Three of the scattered war-ships of the enemy fell in with the vessels of some of our merchants, returning from Ophir, laden with treasure, and, in revenge, they burned and sunk them."

"Were my ships of the number?" asked Arasmanes, with faltering tongue.

"It was of thy ships that I spake," answered the messenger.

But nobody thought of Arasmanes, or of the ten thousand subjects that were killed. The city was out of its wits with joy that his majesty had won the victory.

"Alas, I am a ruined man!" said Arasmanes, as he sat with ashes on his head.

"And we can give no more banquets," sighed his wife.

"And everybody will trample upon us," said Arasmanes.

"And we must give up our palace," groaned the tender Azraaph.

"But one ship remains to me!" cried Arasmanes, starting up: "it is now in port; I will myself be its captain; I will sail myself with it to Ophir; I will save my fortunes, or perish in the attempt."

"And I will accompany thee, my beloved," exclaimed Azraaph, flinging herself on his neck; "*for* I cannot bear the pity of the wives whom I have outshone."

The sea was calm, and the wind favourable, when the unfortunate pair entered their last ship; and for a whole week the gossip at court was the folly of Arasmanes and the devotion of his wife.

CHAPTER XII.

EFFECTS OF A VOYAGE ON THE AFFAIRS AND FEELINGS.

They had not been many weeks at sea before an adverse wind set in, which drove them entirely out of their destined course. In vain the pilot toiled, and Arasmanes stormed; they were beaten eastward; and, at length, even the oldest and most experienced of the

mariners confessed they had entered seas utterly unknown to them. Worn and wearied, when their water was just out, and their provisions exhausted, they espied land, and, at nightfall, the ship anchored on a green and pleasant shore. The inhabitants, half naked, and scarce escaped from the first savage state of nature, ran forth to meet and succour them: by mighty fires the seamen dried their wet garments, and forgot the hardships they had endured. They remained several days with the hospitable savages, repaired their vessel, and replenished its stores. But what especially attracted the notice of Arasmanes was the sight of some precious diamonds which in a rude crown the chief of the savages wore on his head. He learned from signs, easy of interpretation, that these diamonds abounded in a certain island in the farthest east; and that from time to time, large fragments of rock in which they were imbedded were cast upon the shore. But when Arasmanes signified his intention to seek this island, the savages, by gestures of horror and dismay, endeavoured to denote the dangers that attended the enterprise, and to dissuade him from attempting it. Naturally bold, and consumed with his thirst for wealth, these signs made but little impression upon the Chaldæan; and one fair morning he renewed his voyage. Steering perpetually towards the east, and with favouring winds, they came, on the tenth day, in sight of a mighty rock, which shone far down over the waters, with so resplendent a glory as to dazzle the eyes of the seamen. Diamond and ruby, emerald and carbuncle, glittered from the dark soil of the rock, and promised to the heart of the humblest seaman the assurance of illimitable wealth. Never was human joy more ecstatic than that of the whole crew as the ship neared the coast. The sea was in this place narrow and confined, the opposite shore was also in view—black, rugged, and herbless, with pointed rocks, round which the waves sent their white foam on high, guarding its drear approach: little recked

they, however, of the opposite shore, as their eyes strained towards the "Island of Precious Stones." They were in the middle of the strait, when suddenly the waters became agitated and convulsed; the vessel rocked to and fro; something glittering appeared beneath the surface; and, at length, they distinctly perceived the scales and tail of an enormous serpent.

Thereupon a sudden horror seized the whole crew; they recognised the truth of that tradition, known then to all seamen, that in the farthest east lived the vast Snake of the Ocean, whose home no vessel ever approached without destruction. All thought of the diamond rock faded from their souls. They fell at once upon their knees, and poured forth unconscious prayers. But high above all rose the tall form of Arasmanes: little cared he for serpent or tradition. Fame, and fortune, and life were set upon one cast. "Rouse thee!" said he, spurning the pilot, "or we drive upon the opposite shore. Behold, the island of inexhaustible wealth glows upon us!"

Scarce had the words left his lips, when, with a slow and fearful hiss, the serpent of the east seas reared his head from the ocean. Dark and huge as the vastest cavern in which ghoul or Afrite ever dwelt was the abyss of his jaws, and his lurid and terrible eyes outshone even the lustre of the diamond rock.

"I defy thee!" cried Arasmanes, waving his sword above his head; when suddenly the ship whirled round and round; the bold Chaldæan was thrown with violence on the deck; he felt the waters whirl and blacken over him; and then all sense of life deserted him.

When he came to himself, Arasmanes was lying on the hot sands of the shore opposite to the Diamond Isle; wrecks of the vessel were strewn around him, and here and there the dead bodies of his seamen. But at his feet lay, swollen and distorted, the shape of his beautiful Azraaph, the sea-weeds twisted round her limbs, and

the deformed shell-fish crawling over her long hair. And tears crept into the eyes of the Chaldæan, and all his old love for Azraaph returned, and he threw himself down beside her mangled remains, and tore his hair; the schemes of the later years were swept away from his memory like visions, and he remembered only the lone cavern and his adoring bride.

Time rolled on, and Azraaph was buried in the sands; and Arasmanes tore himself from the solitary grave, and, striking into the interior of the coast, sought once more to discover the abodes of men. He travelled far, and beneath burning suns, and at night he surrounded his resting-places with a circle of fire, for the wild beasts and the mighty serpents were abroad; scant and unwholesome was the food he gleaned from the berries and rank roots that now and then were visible in the drear wastes through which he passed; and in this course of hardship and travail he held commune with his own heart. He felt as if cured for ever of the evil passions. Avarice seemed gone from his breast, and he dreamed that no unholy desire could succeed to its shattered throne.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CRUSADE AGAINST PARADISE.

One day, afar off in the desert, he descried a glittering cavalcade—glittering it was indeed, for the horsemen were clad in armour of brass and steel, and the hot sun reflected the array like the march of a river of light. Arasmanes paused, and his heart swelled high within him as he heard through the wide plains the mar-

tial notes of the trumpet and the gong, and recognised the glory and pomp of war.

The cavalcade swept on; and the chief who rode at the head of the band paused as he surveyed with admiration the noble limbs, and proud stature, and dauntless eye of the Chaldæan. The chief summoned his interpreters; and in that age the languages of the east were but slightly dissimilar; so that the chief of the warriors conversed easily with the adventurer. "Know," said he, "that we are bent upon the most glorious enterprise ever conceived by the sons of men. In the farthest east there is a land of which thy father may have informed thee—a land of perpetual happiness and youth, and its name is Aden." Arasmanes started; he could scarce believe his ears. The warrior continued—"We are of that tribe which lies nearest to the east, and this land is therefore a heritage which we of all the earth have the right to claim. Several of our youth have at various times attempted to visit it, but supernatural agents have repelled the attempt. Now, therefore, that I have succeeded to the throne of my sires, I have resolved to invade and conquer it by force of arms. Survey my band. Sawest thou ever, O Chaldæan, men of such limbs and stature, of such weapons of offence, and shields of proof? Canst thou conceive men more worthy of such a triumph, or more certain to attain it? Thou, too, art of proportions beyond the ordinary strength of men—thou art deserving to be one of us. Come, say the word, and the armourers shall clothe thee in steel, and thou shalt ride at my right-hand."

The neighing of steeds, and the clangour of the music, and the proud voice of the chieftain, all inspired the blood of Arasmanes. He thought not of the impiety of the attempt—he thought only of the glory: the object of his whole life seemed placed within his reach. He grasped at the offer of the warrior; and the ar-

mourer clad him in steel, and the ostrich-plume waved over his brow, and he rode at the right-hand of the warrior-king.

CHAPTER XIV.

REASONING AND PERSEVERANCE.

The armament was not without a guide; for, living so near unto the rising of the sun, what with others was tradition, with them was knowledge; and many among them had travelled to the site of Aden, and looked upon the black cloud that veiled it, and trembled at the sound of the rushing but invisible wings that hovered over.

Arasmanes confided to the warrior his whole history; they swore eternal friendship; and the army looked upon the Chaldæan as a man whom God had sent to their assistance. For, what was most strange, not one of the army ever seemed to imagine there was aught unholy or profane in the daring enterprise in which they had enlisted; accustomed to consider bloodshed a virtue, what was the crime of winning the gardens of Paradise by force?

Through wastes and deserts they held their way; and, though their numbers thinned daily by fatigue, and the lack of food, and the fiery breath of the burning winds, they seemed not to relax in their ardour, or to repine at the calamities they endured.

CHAPTER XV.

AN UNEQUAL BATTLE.

Darkness gloomed like a wall! From heaven to earth stretched the palpable and solid Night, that was the barrier to the land of Aden. No object gleamed through the impenetrable blackness; from those summitless walls hung no banner; no human champion frowned before the drear approach: all would have been silence, save that, at times, they heard the solemn rush as of some mighty sea; and they knew that it was the rush of the guardian wings.

The army halted before the darkness, mute and awed; their eyes recoiled from the gloom, and rested upon the towering crest and snowy plumage of their chief. And he bade them light the torches of naphtha that they had brought with them, and unsheath their swords; and, at the given sound, horsemen and horse dashed in through the walls of night. For one instant the torches gleamed and sparkled amid the darkness, and were then suddenly extinguished; but, through the gloom came one gigantic hand, wielding a sword of flame; and wherever it turned man smote his nearest man—father perished by his son—and brother fell gasping by the death-stroke of his brother; shrieks and cries, and the trample of affrighted steeds, rung through the riven shade—riven only by that mighty sword as it waved from rank to rank, and the gloom receded from its rays.

CHAPTER XVI.

A GLIMPSE OF THE DESIRED.

At eve the work was done; a small remnant of the warriors, alone escaped from the general slaughter, lay exhausted upon the ground before the veil of Aden. Arasmanes was the last who lingered in the warring gloom; for, as he lay struggling beneath the press of dying and dead, the darkness had seemed to roll away, and, far into its depths, he caught one glimpse of the wonderful loveliness of Aden. There, over valleys covered with the greenest verdure, and watered by rivers without a wave, basked a purpling and loving sunlight, that was peaceful and cloudless, for it was the smile of God. And there were groups of happy beings scattered around, in whose faces was the serenity of unutterable joy; even at the mere aspect of their happiness, happiness itself was reflected upon the soul of the Chaldæan, despite the dread, the horror, and the desolation of the hour. He stretched out his arms imploringly, and the vision faded for ever from his sight.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE RETREAT.

The king, and all the principal chiefs of the army, were no more; and, with one consent, Arasmanes was proclaimed their leader. Sorrowful and dejected, he conducted the humble remnant of the troop back through the deserts to the land they had so rashly left. Thrice, on their return, they were attacked by hostile tribes, but, by the valour and prudence of Arasmanes, they escaped the peril. They arrived at their native city to find that the brother of their chief had seized the reins of government. The army, who hated him, declared for the stranger-chief who had led them home. And Arasmanes, hurried away by the prospect of power, consented to their will. A battle ensued; the usurper was slain; and Arasmanes, a new usurper, ascended the throne in his stead.

CHAPTER XVIII.

COMFORTS OF MAJESTY.

The Chaldæan was no longer young; the hardships he had undergone in the desert had combined with the anxieties that had preyed upon him during his residence in the City of Golden Palaces, to plant upon his brow,

and in his heart, the furrows of untimely age. He was in the possession of all the sources of enjoyment at that period when we can no longer enjoy. Howbeit, he endeavoured to amuse himself by his divan of justice, from which everybody went away dissatisfied, and his banquets, at which the courtiers complained of his want of magnificence, and the people of his profligate expense. Grown wise by experience, he maintained his crown by flattering his army; and, surrounded by luxury, felt himself supported by power.

There came to the court of Arasmanes a strange traveller: he was a little old man, of plain appearance, but great wisdom; in fact, he was one of the most noted sages of the East. His conversation, though melancholy, had the greatest attraction for Arasmanes, who loved to complain to him of the business of royalty, and the tediousness of his life.

"Ah, how much happier are those in an humbler station!" said the king: "how much happier was I in the desert-cave, tending my herds, and listening to the sweet voice of Azraaph. Would that I could recall those days!"

"I can enable thee to do so, great king!" said the sage: "behold this mirror; gaze on it whenever you desire to recall the past; and whatever portion of the past you wish to summon to your eyes shall appear before you."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHARM OF THE PAST.

The sage did not deceive Arasmanes. The mirror reflected all the scenes through which the Chaldæan had passed: now he was at the feet of Chosphor, a happy boy—now with elastic hopes entering into the enchanted valley of the Nymph ere yet he learned how her youth could fade—now he was at the source of the little stream, and gazing on the face of Azraaph by the light of the earliest star; whatever of these scenes he wished to live over again reflected itself vividly in the magic mirror. Surrounded by pomp and luxury in the present, his only solace was in the past.

"You see that I was right," said he to the sage: "I was much happier in those days; else why so anxious to renew them?"

"Because, O great king," said the sage, with a bitter smile, "you see them without recalling the feelings you then experienced as well as the scenes; you gaze on the past with the feelings you *now* possess, and all that then made the prospect clouded is softened away by time. Judge for yourself if I speak true." So saying, the sage breathed over the mirror, and bade Arasmanes look into it once more. He did so. He beheld the same scenes, but the illusion was gone from them. He was a boy once more; but restlessness, and anxiety, and a thousand petty cares at his heart: he was again in the cave with Azraaph, but secretly pining at the wearisome monotony of his life: in all those scenes he now imagined the happiest, he perceived that he had not enjoyed

the *present;* he had been looking forward to the future, and the dream of the unattainable Aden was at his heart. "Alas!" said he, dashing the mirror into pieces, "I was deceived; and thou hast destroyed for me, O sage, even the pleasure of the past!"

CHAPTER XX.

PREPARATION FOR PARADISE.

ARASMANES never forgot the brief glimpse of Aden that he had obtained in his impious warfare; and, now that the charm was gone from Memory, the wish yet to reach the unconquered land returned more powerfully than ever to his mind. He consulted the sage as to its possibility.

"Thou canst make but one more attempt," answered the wise man; "and in that I cannot assist thee; but one who, when I am gone hence, will visit thee, shall lend thee her aid."

"Cannot the visiter come till thou art gone?" said Arasmanes.

"No, nor until my death," answered the sage.

This reply threw the mind of Arasmanes into great confusion. It was true that he nowhere found so much pleasure as in the company of his friend—it was his only solace; but then, if he could never visit Aden (the object of his whole life), until that friend were dead,—the thought was full of affliction to him. He began to look upon the sage as an enemy, as an obstacle between himself and the possession of his wishes. He inquired every morning into the health of the sage; he seemed most provokingly strong. At length, from wishes for

his death, dark thoughts came upon the Chaldæan; and he resolved to expedite it. One night the sage was found dead in his bed; he had been strangled by the order of the king.

CHAPTER XXI.

A DISAGREEABLE VISITER.

THE very next day, as the king sat in his divan, a great noise was heard without the doors; and presently, a hag dressed in a white garment of a foreign fashion, and of a hideous and revolting countenance, broke away from the crowd, and made up to the king: "They would not let me come to thee, because I am homely and aged," said she, in a shrill and discordant voice; "but I have been in a king's court before now—"

"What wantest thou, woman?" said Arasmanes; and he felt, as he spake, a chill creep to his heart.

"I am that visiter of which the wise man spake," said she, "and I would talk to thee alone."

Arasmanes felt impelled as by some mighty power which he could not withstand; he rose from his throne, the assembly broke up in surprise, and the hag was admitted alone to the royal presence.

"Thou wouldst reseek Aden, the land of Happiness and Truth?" said she, with a ghastly smile.

"Ay," said the king, and his knees knocked together.

"I will take thee thither."

"And when?"

"To-morrow, if thou wilt!" and the hag laughed

aloud. There was something in the manner, the voice, and the appearance of this creature so disgusting to Arasmanes that he could brook it no longer. Aden itself seemed not desirable with such a companion and guide.

Without vouchsafing a reply he hastened from the apartment, and bade his guards to admit the hag no more to the royal presence.

The sleep of Arasmanes that night was unusually profound, nor did he awaken on the following day till late at noon. From that hour he felt as if some strange revolution had taken place in his thoughts. He was no longer desirous of seeking Aden: whether or not the apparition of the hag had given him a distaste of Aden itself, certain it was, he felt the desire of his whole life had vanished entirely from his breast; and his only wish now was to enjoy, as long and as heartily as he was able, the pleasures that were within his reach.

"What a fool have I been," said he aloud, "to waste so many years in wishing to leave the earth! Is it only in my old age that I begin to find how much that is agreeable earth can possess?"

"Come, come, come!" cried a shrill voice; and Arasmanes, startled, turned round to behold the terrible face of the hag.

"Come!" said she, stamping her foot, "I am ready to conduct thee to Aden."

"Wretch!" said the king, with quivering lips, "how didst thou baffle my guards? But I will strangle every one of them."

"Thou hast had enough of strangling," answered the crone, with a malignant glare. "Hast thou not strangled thy dearest friend?"

"What! tauntest thou me?" cried the king; and he rushed at the hag with his lifted sabre: the blade cut the air: the hag had shunned the blow; and, at the same moment coming behind the king, she clasped him around

the body, and fixed her long talons in his breast: through the purple robe, through the jewelled vest, pierced those vulture fangs, and Arasmanes shrieked aloud with the terror and the pain. The guards rushed in at the sound of his cry.

"Villains!" said he, as the cold drops broke from his brow, "would ye leave me here to be murdered? Hew down yon hell-hag; her death only can preserve life to you."

"We saw her not enter, O king," said the chief of the guards, amazed; "but she shall now die the death." The soldiers with one accord made at the crone, who stood glaring at them like a hunted tigress.

"Fools!" said she, "know that I laugh alike at stone walls and armed men."

They heard the voice—they saw not whence it came—the hag had vanished.

CHAPTER XXII.

REMORSE.

The wound which the talons of this horrible visiter had made in the breast of the king refused to heal: it gave him excruciating anguish. The physicians tended him in vain; in vain, too, did the wise men preach patience and hope to him. What incensed him even more than the pain was the insult he had suffered—that such a loathsome and obscene wretch should dare to maim the person of a king!—the thought was not to be borne. But what was most strange, the more pain the king suffered, the more did he endeavour to court pleasure; life never seemed so charming to him as at the

moment when it became intolerable. His favourite courtiers, who had been accustomed to flatter his former weakness, and converse with him about the happiness of Aden, and the possibility of entering it, found that even to broach the subject threw their royal master into a paroxysm of rage. He foamed at the mouth at the name of Aden—he wished, nay, he endeavoured to believe, that there was no such place in the universe.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A TEMPTING OFFER.

At length, one physician, more sanguine than the rest, assured the king that he was able to cure the wound and relieve the pain.

"Know, O king," said he, "that in the stream of Athron, which runneth through the valley of Mythra, there is a mystic virtue to cure all the diseases of kings. Thou hast only to enter thy gilded bark, and glide down the stream for the space of twenty roods, scattering thine offering of myrrh and frankincense on the waters, in order to be well once more. Let the king live for ever!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

AND THE LAST.

It was a dark, deep, and almost waveless stream; and the courtiers, and the women, and the guards, and the wise men gathered round the banks; and the king, leaning on the physician, ascended the gilded bark; and the physician alone entered the vessel with him—"For," said he, "the god of the stream loves it not to be profaned by the vulgar crowd; it is for kings only that it possesses healing virtue."

So the king reclined in the middle of the vessel, and the physician took the censer of precious odours; and the bark drifted down the stream, as the crowd wept and prayed upon the shore.

"Either my eyes deceive me," said the king, faintly, "or the stream seems to expand supernaturally, as into a great sea, and the shores on either side fade into distance."

"It is so," answered the physician. "And seest thou yon arch of black rocks flung over the tide?"

"Ay," answered the king.

"It is the approach to the land thou hast so often desired to reach; it is the entrance into Aden."

"Dog!" cried the king, passionately, "name not to me that hateful word."

As he spoke, the figure of the false physician shrunk in size; his robes fell from him,—and the king beheld in his stead the dwarfish shape of the accursed hag.

On drifted the vessel; and the crowd on the banks now beheld the hag seize the king in a close embrace:

his shriek was wafted over the water, while the gorgeous vessel, with its silken streamers and gilded sides, sped rapidly through the black arch of rocks. As the bark vanished, the chasm of the arch closed in, and the rocks, uniting, presented a solid barrier to their gaze. But, piercing through the barrier, they shudderingly heard the ghastly laugh of the hag, as she uttered the one word—"NEVER!" And from that hour the king was seen no more.

And this is the true history of Arasmanes the Chaldæan.

END OF ARASMANES.

THE CHOICE OF PHYLIAS,

A TALE.

PHYLIAS was a young Athenian, whom the precepts of Socrates had reared in the two great principles (or rather, perhaps, affections) which a state should encourage in her sons—the desire of Glory, and the worship of Virtue. He wished at once to be great and to be good. Unfortunately, Phylias nourished a third wish, somewhat less elevated, but much more commonly entertained—the wish to be loved! He had a strong thirst for general *popularity* as well as *esteem*; and to an aspiring soul he united a too susceptible heart.

One day, as he was wandering among the olive-groves that border Cephisus, and indulging in those reveries on his future destiny which make the happiest prerogative of the young, his thoughts thus broke into words:—

"Yes, I will devote my life to the service of my countrymen: I will renounce luxury and ease. Not for me shall be the cooks of Sicily, or the garlands of Janus. My chambers shall not steam with frankincense, nor resound with the loud shouts of Ionic laughter. No; I will consecrate my youth to the pursuit of wisdom, and the practice of virtue; so shall I become great, and so beloved. For when I have thus sacrificed my enjoyments to the welfare of others, shall they not all

honour and esteem me? Will they not insist that I take the middle couch at the public festivals? and will not all the friends of my youth contend which shall repose upon my bosom? It is happy to be virtuous; but, O Socrates, is it not even happier to be universally beloved for your virtue?"

While Phylias was thus soliloquizing, he heard a low sweet laugh beside him; and, somewhat startled at the sound—for he had fancied himself entirely alone—he turned hastily round, and beheld a figure of very singular appearance. It was a tall man, in the prime of life: but one side of the face and form was utterly different from the other; on one side the head was crowned with the festive wreath—the robes flowed loose and disordered—joy and self-complacency sparkled on the smiling countenance. You beheld a gayety that you could not help liking; but an air of levity which you could not respect. Widely contrasted was the other half of this strange apparition: without crown or garland, after the fashion of a senator of the Areopagus, flowed the sober locks; the garb was costly, but decent and composed; and in the eye and brow the aspect was dignified and lofty, but somewhat pensive, and clouded either by thought or care: in the one half you beheld a boon companion, whom you would welcome and forget—in the other a lofty monitor, from whom you shrank in unacknowledged fear, and whom even in esteeming you were willing carefully to shun.

"And who art thou? And from what foreign country comest thou?" asked the Athenian, in astonishment and awe.

"I come from the land of the Invisibles," answered the apparition; "and I am thy tutelary demon. Thou art now of that age, and hast attained to that height of mind, in which it is permitted me to warn and to advise thee. What vain dreams, O Phylias, have crept into thy mind! Dost thou not see that thou art asking two

boons utterly incompatible with each other—universal fame and universal regard? Take thy choice of either; thou canst not combine both. Look well at the guise and garb in which I appear to thee; if thou wouldst be loved, thou seest in one half of me the model thou shouldst imitate; if renowned, the other half presents thee also with an example. But how canst thou hope to unite both? Look again; can any contrast be stronger? Can any opposites be more extreme? Waste not thy life in a chimera. Be above thy race, and be hated; be of their own level, and be loved. Thou hast thy choice!"

"False demon!" answered Phylias; "thou wouldst sicken me of life itself couldst thou compel me to be hated on the one hand, or worthy to be despised on the other. Thou knowest not my disposition. It hath in it nothing cynical or severe; neither should I presume upon any distinction I might attain. Why should men hate me merely for *proving* the sincerity of my affection to them? Away! thou utterest folly or fraud, and art not of that good race of demons of which Socrates was wont to speak."

Once more the demon laughed. "Thou wilt know me better one of these days; and what now thou deemest *folly*, thou wilt then term *experience*. Thou resolvest, then, to seek for glory?"

"With my whole soul!" cried the Athenian.

"Be it so; and, from time to time, contrast thyself with Glaucus. Farewell!"

The apparition vanished: musing and bewildered, Phylias returned home.

His resolutions were not shaken, nor his ambition damped. He resigned the common pleasures of his youth; he braced his limbs by hardihood and temperance, and fed the sources of his mind from the quiet fountain of wisdom.

The first essays of his ambition were natural to his

period of life. He went through the preparatory exercises, and entered himself a candidate for the victorial crown at the Olympic Games. On the day preceding that on which the games commenced, Phylias met among the crowd, which a ceremony of such brilliant attraction had gathered together at Olympia, a young man whom he had known from his childhood. Frank in his manner, and joyous in his disposition, Glaucus was the favourite of all who knew him.

Though possessed of considerable talents, no one envied him; for those talents were never exerted in order to distinguish himself—his ambition was to amuse others. He gave way to every caprice of his own or of his comrades, provided that it promised pleasure. Supple and versatile, even the sturdiest philosophers were charmed with his society; and the loosest profligates swore sincerely that they loved, because they were not driven to respect him. His countenance never shamed them into a suspicion that their career was ignoble; and they did justice to his talents, because they could sympathize with his foibles.

"You do not contend for any of the prizes, I think," said Phylias; "for I do not remember to have seen you at the preparatory exercises?"

"Not I, by Hercules," answered Glaucus, gayly. "I play in the games the part that I play in life—I am merely a spectator. Could I drink more deeply, or sleep more soundly, if my statue were set up in the sacred wood? Alas! no. Let my friends love Glaucus their comrade—not hate Glaucus their rival. And you?"

"I am a competitor in the chariot race."

"Success to you! I shall offer up my sacrifice for your triumph; meanwhile I am going to hear Therecydes read his new play. Farewell!"

"What a charming person is Glaucus!" thought Phylias.

Even Phylias liked Glaucus the better for knowing Glaucus was not to be his antagonist.

The morning rose—the hour of trial came on. With a flushed cheek, and a beating heart, Phylias mounted his chariot. He was successful: his locks were crowned with the olive-wreath. He returned to Athens amid the loudest acclamations. His chariot rolled through the broken wall of his native city; the poets lauded him to the skies. Phylias had commenced the career of fame; and its first-fruits were delicious. His parents wept with joy at his triumph; and the old men pointed him out as a model to their sons. Sons hate models: and the more Phylias was praised, the more his contemporaries disliked him. When the novelty of success was cooled, he began to feel that the olive-crown had its thorns. If he met his young friends in the street, they saluted him coldly: "We do not ask you to come to us," said they; "you have weightier matters on hand than our society can afford. We are going to sup with Glaucus; while you are meditating, we suppose, the best way to eclipse Alcibiades."

Meetings like these threw an embarrassment over the manner of Phylias himself. He thought that he was ill-treated, and retired into the chamber of pride. He became shy, and he was called supercilious.

The Olympic Games do not happen every day, and Phylias began to feel that he who is ambitious has no option between excitement and *ennui*. He therefore set about preparing himself for a nobler triumph than that of a charioteer; and from the government of horses aspired to the government of men. He fitted himself for the labours of public life, and the art of public speaking. He attended the popular assemblies—he rose into repute as an orator.

Every one knows that at that time Athens was torn by intestine divisions. Alternately caressing and quar-

relling with the passionate Alcibiades, his countrymen now saw him a foe in Sparta, and now hailed him as a saviour in Athens. Phylias, dreading the ambition of that unprincipled genius, and yet resisting the encroaching tyranny of the four hundred rulers, performed the duty of a patriot, and, pleading for liberty, displeased both parties. Nothing could be more disinterested than his conduct, or more admired than his speeches. He proved his virtue, and he established his fame; and wherever he went he was universally abused.

He frequently met with Glaucus, who, taking no share in politics, was entertained by all parties, and the most popular man of Athens, because the most unobtrusive.

"You are become a great man now," said Glaucus to him one day; "and you will doubtless soon arrive at the last honour Athens can confer upon her children. Your property will be confiscated, and your person will be exiled."

"No!" said Phylias, with generous emotion; "truth is great, and must prevail. Misinterpretation and slander will soon die away, and my countrymen will do me justice."

"The gods grant it!" said the flattering Glaucus. "No man merits it more."

In the short intervals of repose that public life allowed to the Athenians, Phylias contrived to fall in love.

Chyllene was beautiful as a dream. She was full of all amiable qualities; but she was a human being, and fond of an agreeable life.

In his passion for Chyllene, Phylias, for the first time in his career, found a rival in Glaucus; for love was the only passion in which Glaucus did not shun to provoke the jealousy of the powerful. Chyllene was sorely perplexed which to choose; Phylias was so wise, but then Glaucus was so gay; Phylias was so distinguished,

but then Glaucus was so popular; Phylias made excellent speeches, but then how beautifully Glaucus sung!

Unfortunately, in the stern and manly pursuits of his life, Phylias had necessarily outgrown those little arts of pleasing which were so acceptable to the ladies of Athens. He dressed with a decorous dignity, but not with the studied, yet easy graces of Glaucus. How, too, amid all his occupations, could he find the time to deck the doors of his beloved with garlands, to renew the libations on her threshold, and to cover every wall in the city with her name added to the flattering epithet of καλη. But none of these important ceremonies were neglected by Glaucus, in whom the art to please had been the sole study of life. Glaucus gained ground daily.

"I esteem you beyond all men," Chyllene could say to Phylias without a blush. But she trembled, and said nothing, when Glaucus approached.

"I love you better than all things!" said Glaucus, passionately, one day to Chyllene.

"I love you better than all things, save my country," said Phylias the same morning.

"Ah, Phylias is doubtless the best patriot," thought Chyllene; "but Glaucus is certainly the best lover!"

The very weaknesses of Glaucus were charming, but his virtues gave Phylias a little of austerity. With Phylias Chyllene felt ashamed of her faults; with Glaucus she was only aware of her excellence.

Alcibiades was now the idol of Athens. He prepared to set out with a hundred ships for the Hellespont, to assist the allies of Athens. Willing to rid the city of so vigilant a guard upon his actions as Phylias, he contrived that the latter should be appointed to a command in the fleet. The rank of Glaucus obtained him a lesser but distinguished appointment.

Chyllene was in danger of losing both her lovers.

"Wilt thou desert me?" said she to Phylias.

"Alas! my country demands it. I shall return to thee covered with laurels."

"And thou, Glaucus?"

"Perish Alcibiades, and Greece herself, before I quit thee!" cried Glaucus, who, had there been no mistress in the case, would never willingly have renounced luxury for danger.

Phylias, with a new incentive to glory, and a full confidence in the sympathy of his beloved, set out for Andria. Glaucus was taken suddenly ill, remained at home, and a month afterward his bride Chyllene was carried by torchlight to his house. It is true that everybody at Athens detected the imposition; but every one laughed at it good-humouredly; "for Glaucus," said they, "never set up for a paragon of virtue!" Thus his want of principle was the very excuse for wanting it.

The expedition to Andria failed—Alcibiades was banished again—and Phylias, though he had performed prodigies of valour, shared in the sentence of his leader. His fellow-citizens were too glad of an excuse to rid themselves of that unpleasant sensation which the superiority of another always inflicts on our self-love.

Years rolled away. Phylias had obtained all that his youth coveted of glory. Greece rung with his name: he was now aged, an exile, and a dependant at the Persian court. There every one respected, but no one loved him. The majesty of his mien, the simplicity of his manners, the very splendour of his reputation, made the courtiers of Persepolis uneasy in his presence. He lived very much alone; and his only recreation was in walking at evening among the alleys of a wood, that reminded him of the groves of Athens, and meditating over the past adventures of his life.

It happened that at this time Glaucus, who had survived both his wife and his patrimony, had suffered him-

self, under the hope of repairing his broken fortunes, to be entrapped into a conspiracy to restore the Oligarchy, after the death of Conon. He was detected, and his popularity did not save him from banishment. He sought refuge at Persepolis: the elastic gayety of his disposition still continued, and over his gray hairs yet glowed the festive chaplet of roses. The courtiers were delighted with his wit—the king could not feast without him;—they consulted Phylias, but they associated with Glaucus.

One evening as Phylias was musing in his favourite grove, and as afar off he heard the music and the merriment of a banquet (held by the king in his summer-house, and with Glaucus at his right hand), the melancholy exile found himself gently plucked by the hem of his garment. He turned hastily round, and once more beheld his genius.

"Thy last hour fast approaches," said the demon; "again, then, I come to visit thee. At the morning of life I foretold that fate which should continue to its close: I bade thee despair of uniting celebrity and love. Thou hast attempted the union—what hath been thy success?"

"Mysterious visiter!" answered Phylias, "thy words were true, and my hope was formed in the foolishness of youth. I stand alone, honoured and unloved. But surely this is not the doom of all who have pursued a similar ambition, but mine alone."

"Recollect thyself," replied the phantom; "was not thy master Socrates persecuted unto death, and Aristides ostracized on account of his virtues? Canst thou name one great man who in life was not calumniated for his services? Thou standest not alone. To shine is to injure the self-love of others; and self-love is the most vindictive of human feelings."

"Yet, had I not been an Athenian," murmured Phylias, "I might have received something of gratitude."

"They call Athens ungrateful," answered the spectre; "but everywhere, while time lasts, the ingratitude shall be the same. One state may exile her illustrious men, another merely defame them; but day is not more separate from night, than true fame and general popularity."

"Alas! thou teachest a bitter lesson," said Phylias, sighing: "better, then, to renounce the glory which separates us from the indulgent mercies of our kind. Has not my choice been an error, as well as a misfortune?"

The countenance of the genius became suddenly divine. Majesty sat upon his brow, and unspeakable wisdom shone from his piercing eyes, as he replied, "Hark! as thou askest of me thy unworthy question, the laugh of the hoary Glaucus breaks upon thine ear. The gods gave to him the privilege to be beloved—and despised. Wouldst thou, were the past at thy control, wouldst thou live the life that he hath lived? wouldst thou, for the smiles of revellers, or for the heart of the mistress of thy manhood, feel thy career had been worthless, and thy sepulchre should be unknown? No; by the flush upon thy cheek, thou feelest that to the great the pride of recollection is sufficient happiness in itself. Thy *only* error was in this,—the wish to obtain the fleeting breath of popular regard, as the *reward* for immortal labours. The illustrious should serve the world, unheeding of its frail applause. Their hearts are their proper world. Thou shouldst have sought only to be great, so would it never have grieved thee to find thyself unbeloved. The soul of the great should be as a river, rejoicing in its mighty course, and benefiting all—nor conscious of the fading garlands which perishable hands may scatter upon its tide."

The corpse of Phylias was found that night in the wood by some of the revellers returning home. And the Persian king buried the body in a gorgeous sepulchre,

and the citizens of Athens ordained a public mourning for his death. And to the name of Phylias a thousand bards promised immortality—and, save in this momentary record, the name of Phylias has perished from the earth!

THE END.

A LETTER

TO

A LATE CABINET MINISTER

ON THE

PRESENT CRISIS.

"But, my lords, how is the king's government to be carried on?"—*The Duke of Wellington on the Reform Bill.*

"The general appearance of submission . . . . encouraged the king to remove from office the Marquis of Halifax, with whose liberal opinions he had recently, as well as early, been dissatisfied. As the king found that Halifax would not comply with his projects, he determined to dismiss him before the meeting of Parliament."—*Mackintosh's History of the Revolution, Chap.* 2.

FROM THE NINTH LONDON EDITION.

A LETTER

TO A LATE CABINET MINISTER.

My Lord;

The Duke of Wellington has obtained many victories, but he never yet has obtained a victory over the English people!—That battle is now to be adventured; it has been tried before, but in vain. On far worse ground the great captain hazards it again; for his first battle was to *prevent* giving power to the people; the power obtained, his second is to *resist* it. It is the usual fate of fortunate warriors, that their old age is the sepulchre of their renown. No man has read the history of England without compassion for the hero of Anne's time. Marlborough in his glory, and Marlborough in his dotage; what a satire in the contrast! With a genius for war, it may be, equal; with a genius in peace, incontestibly inferior; with talents far less various; with a knowledge of his times far less profound; with his cunning and his boldness, without his eloquence and his skill, the Duke of Wellington has equalled the glory of Marlborough,—is he about to surpass his dotage? Marlborough was a trickster, but he sought only to trick a court; has the Duke of Wellington a grander ambition, and would he trick a people? "Like chimneys," said the wise man, "which are useful in winter and useless in summer, soldiers are great in war and valueless in peace." The chimney smokes again!—there is a shout from the philosophers who dis-

agree with the wise man, "See how useful it is!"—but it smokes because it has kept the soot of the last century, and has just set the house in a blaze!—the smoke of the chimney, in this instance, is only the first sign of the conflagration of the edifice.

Let us, my lord, examine the present state of affairs. Your lordship is one of that portion of the late ministry which has been considered most liberal. Acute, far-seeing, and accomplished, with abilities which, exercised in a difficult position, have been singularly successful in the results they achieved, your lordship is among those whose elevation to the cabinet was hailed with a wider satisfaction than that of a party—and so short a time has elapsed between your accession and retirement (expulsion would be the proper term), that you are but little implicated in the faults or virtues of the administration, over whose grave I shall endevavour, in the course of this letter, to inscribe a just and impartial epitaph. I address to you, my lord, these observations, as one interested alike in the preservation of order, and the establishment of a popular government—there may be a few who wish to purchase the one at the expense of the other; you wish to unite them, and so do I. And we are both confident that such is yet the wish,—nay more—the assured *hope*, of the majority of the English people.

The king has dissolved Lord Melbourne's administration, and the Duke of Wellington is at the head of affairs. Who will be his colleagues is a question that admits of no speculation. We are as certain of the list as if it were already in the Gazette. It is amusing to see the now ministerial journals giving out, that we are not on any account to suppose, that it must necessarily be a high conservative cabinet. God forbid so rash a conjecture! "Who knows," say they, "but what many Whigs—many Liberals, will be a part of it! We are only waiting for Sir Robert Peel, in order to show you,

perhaps, that the government will—*not* be Tory!"* So, then, after all the Tory abuse of the Whigs—after all the assertions of their unpopularity, it is nevertheless convenient to insinuate that some of these most abominable men may yet checker and relieve the too expectant and idolatrous adoration with which the people would be imbued for a cabinet purely conservative! The several ambrosias of Wellington and Londonderry, of Herries and Peel, would be too strong for mortal tastes, if blended into one divine combination—so they might as well pop a Whig or two into the composition, just to make it fit for mankind! The hypothesis may be convenient—but, unhappily, no one accepts it. Every man in the political world who sees an inch before his nose, is aware that, though his grace may have an option with respect to measures, he has none with respect to men. He may filch away the Whig policy, but he cannot steal the Whigs themselves without their consent. And the fact is notorious, that there is not a single man of liberal politics, a single man who either belonged to the late government, or has supported popular measures, who will take office under the Duke of Wellington, charm he never so wisely. It is said, my lord, by those who ought best to know, that even Lord Stanley, of whom, by the unthinking, a momentary doubt was entertained, scorns the very notion of a coalition with the conservatives; a report I credit at once, because it is congenial to the unblemished integrity and haughty honour of the man. The Duke of Wellington, then, has no option as to the party he must co-invest with office—unless, indeed, he strip himself of all power, abdicate the post of *chef*, and send up to his majesty the very same bill-of-fare which has just been found so unpalatable to the royal tastes. This is not exactly probable. And

* "It is possible his grace may think that some of the Whig leaders who are abroad or absent from London, are likely to form useful components of a new administration."—*Standard.*

we know, therefore, even before Sir Robert Peel arrives, and whether Sir Robert Peel take office or whether he do not,—we know that his grace's colleagues, or his grace's nominees, can only be the dittos of himself—it is the farce of Anti-Reform once more, by Mr. Sarum and his family—it is the old company again, and with the old motto, "Vivant Rex et Regina!" Nowadays, even in farces, the loyalty of the playbill does not suffice to carry the public. Thank God! for the honour of political virtue, it *is*, and *can* be, no compromise of opinions! no intermixture of Whigs and Tories! not a single name to which the heart of the people ever for a moment responded, will be found to relieve the well-known list of downright, thorough, uncompromising enemies to all which concedes abuse to the demands of opinion. Your lordship remembers in Virgil how Æneas meets suddenly with the souls of those who were to return to the earth they had before visited, after drinking deep enough of oblivion; so now how eager —how noisy—how anxious wait the conservative shadows for the happy hour that is to unite them to the substance of place!

—Strepit omnis murmure campus!

How they must fret and chafe for the appointed time!—but, in the meanwhile, have *they drunk of the Lethe?* If *they* have, unhappily, the world to which they return has not had a similar advantage; they are escaped from their purgatory before the appointed time—for the date which Virgil and we gave them, in order completely to cleanse their past misdeeds, was—a thousand years! In the meanwhile, there they stand,—mistaken, unequivocal! Happy rogues!—behold them, in the elysium of their hopes, perched upon little red boxes, tied together by little red strings!

. . . . . "Iterumque in tarda reverti
Corpora; quæ lucis miseris tam dira cupido?"

Well may the Times and the Tories say they will be "a united cabinet;"—united they always were in their own good days of the Liverpool ascendency—united to take office at every risk, to seize all they can get, to give nothing that they can refuse! My God! what delight among the subordinate scramblers to see before them once more the prospect of a quarter's salary! They have been out of service a long time—their pride is down—they are willing to be hired by the job; a job too of the nature of their old services; for, without being a prophet, one may venture to predict that they will have little enough to do for their money. When workingday commences with the next session of parliament, they will receive their wages and their discharge. They have gone into sinecures again! honest fellows! they are making quick use of the Poor Law bill,—in which it is ordained that able-bodied paupers out of employ should be taken *in doors for relief!* And yet, I confess, there is something melancholy as well as ludicrous, in the avidity of these desperadoes. The great Florentine historian informs us, with solemn indignation (as something till then unheard of in the corruption of human nature), that in the time of the plague there were certain men who rejoiced, for it was an excellent time for pillage!—the people perished, but the brigands throve! And nothing, we might imagine at first, could exceed the baseness of those who sought to enrich themselves amid the general affliction. But, on consideration, we must deem those men still baser, who do not find, but who create the disorder; and who not only profit by the danger of the public, but, in order to obtain the profit, produce the danger!—For, my lord, there are two propositions which I hold to be incontestable:—first, that the late resolution of the king, if sudden in effect, was the result of a previous and secret understanding that the Tories would accept office; and that his majesty never came to the determination of dis-

missing my Lord Melbourne, until he had ascertained, mediately or immediately (it matters not which, nor how long ago), that the Duke of Wellington was not only prepared to advise the king as to his successor, but could actually pledge himself to form a ministry.

I grant that this is denied, though feebly, by the conservative journals; but to what an alternative would belief in that denial reduce us! Can we deem so meanly of the royal prudence as to imagine that the king *could* dismiss one government without being assured that he could form another? In what an awful situation would this empire be placed, could we attribute to his majesty, with the Tory tellers of the tale, so utter a want of the commonest resources of discretion—so reckless and improvident a lunacy!

But it may be granted, perhaps, that the king was aware that the Duke of Wellington *would* either undertake to form a cabinet, or to advise his majesty as to its formation, whenever it should please the king to exercise his undoubted prerogative in the dismissal of Lord Melbourne, and yet be asserted that neither that understanding nor that dismissal was the result of intrigue. Doubtless! Who knows so little of a court as to suppose that an intrigue is ever carried on within its precincts? Is not that the place, above all others, where the secret whisper, the tranquil hint, the words that never commit the speaker, the invisible writing and automaton talking of diplomacy, are never known! It is never in a court that an intrigue is formed; and the reason is obvious—because they have always another name for it! There was no intrigue then. Why should there be one? The king might never have spoken to the Duke of Wellington on the subject—the Duke of Wellington might be perfectly unaware of what time or on what pretext Lord Melbourne would be dismissed; and yet the king might, and must (for who can say a king has not common sense?) have known that the duke

would accept office whenever Lord Melbourne was dismissed; and the duke have known, on his part, that the king was aware of that loyal determination. This is so plain a view of the case, that it requires no state explanations to convince us of it, or persuade us out of it.

The duke, then, and his colleagues, were willing to accept office: on the knowledge of that willingness the king exercised his prerogative; and since we now see no other adviser of the crown, it is his grace alone whom we must consider responsible for the coming experiment, which is to back the House of Lords against the representatives of the people.

I hold it as a second and incontestable proposition, that in this experiment there is danger, were it only for Ireland. The struggle has begun—the people have not been the first to commence—they will be the last to leave it. It is a struggle between the court and the people. My lord, recollect that fearful passage, half tragedy, half burlesque, in the history of France, which we now see renewed in England—when Mirabeau rose up in the midst of an assembly suddenly dissolved, and the nation beheld the *tiers état* on one side, and—the master of the ceremonies on the other!

The Duke of Wellington is guiltless of the lore of history, not so his colleagues. I will concede the whole question of danger in the struggle about to be—I will subscribe to the wisdom of the experiment—I will renounce liberty itself—if Sir Robert Peel, so accomplished in letters—if Sir George Murray, so erudite in history, will but tell us of a single instance in which the people, having firmly obtained the ascendant power,—having held that power for two years, have, at the end of that period, spontaneously resigned it. The English people have the power now, in their elections: an election is at hand—there is no army to awe, no despot to subdue, no enemy to embarrass them—will they, of their

own accord, give back that power to the very men from whom they have wrenched it? The notion is so preposterous, that we can scarcely imagine the design of the new cabinet to rest with the experiment of a new parliament: it would seem as if they meditated the alternative of governing without a parliament at all—as if they would hazard again the attempt of the Stuarts; as if the victor of Waterloo were already looking less to the conduct of the electors than to the loyalty of the army. In fact, this is not so wholly extravagant an expectation as it may seem. The Tories fear the people—why should the people not fear the Tories? They call us desirous of a revolution—why may we not think they would crush that revolution in the bud, by a despotism? Nor, for politicians without principle, would the attempt be so ridiculous as our pride might suppose. It seems to me, if they *are* resolved to govern us, that the sword would be the best sceptre. A resolute army, well disciplined and well officered, with the Duke of Wellington at the head, would be a far more formidable enemy to the people than half a score of hack officials in the council, and a legion of smoothfaced conservatives, haranguing, bribing, promising,—abusing known reformers, and promising unknown reforms, to the "ten-pound philosophers" from the hustings: the latter experiment *is* ridiculous, the former is more grave and statesmanlike. If a Londonderry would have advised his majesty to call in the Duke of Wellington, a Machiavelli would have told him in doing so to calculate on the army. Folly in these days, as in all others, can only be supported and rendered venerable by force.

As yet we are lost in astonishment at the late changes: we are not angry—we are too much amused and too confident of our own strength to be angry. So groundless seems the change, that people imagine it only to be fathomed by the most recondite conjectures.

They are lost in a wilderness of surmise ; and yet, I fancy that the mystery is not difficult to solve.

Let us for a moment leave Lord Althorp out of the question ; we will come to him by-and-by. Let us consider the question of reforming the Irish church. England has two prominent causes of trouble : the one is the state of Ireland, the other is her House of Lords. Now it is notorious that we cannot govern Ireland without a very efficient and thorough reform in the mighty grievance of her church ; it is equally notorious that that reform the House of Lords would reject. We foresaw this—we all knew that in six months the collision between the two houses would come—we all knew that the lords would reject that reform, and we all felt assured that Lord Melbourne would tell the king that he was not fit to be a minister if he could *not carry it*. There is the collision! in that collision, which would have yielded ? Not the House of Commons. All politicians, even the least prophetic, must have foreseen this probability, this certainty. His majesty (let us use our common sense) *must* have foreseen it too. Doubtless, his majesty foresaw also that this was not the sole question of dispute which his present administration and his present House of Commons would have been compelled by public opinion to raise with the hereditary chamber, and his majesty therefore resolved to take the earliest decorous opportunity of preventing the collision, not by gaining the lords, but by dismissing the commons ; and he now hopes, *by the assistance of the leader of the House of Lords*, to make the attempt to govern his faithful subjects, not by the voice of that chamber they have chosen for themselves, but by that very assembly who were formerly in the habit of choosing for them. It is an attempt to solve our most difficult problem, an attempt to bring the two houses into harmony with each other ; but it is on an unexpected principle. There is an anecdote of Sheridan, that

walking home one night, not altogether so sober as he should be, he was suddenly accosted by a gentleman in the gutter, considerably more drunk than himself. "For the love of God, help me up!" cried the stranger. "My dear sir," hiccoughed Sheridan, "*that* is out of the question. I cannot help you up; but (let us compromise the matter) *I will lie down by you!*"—The House of Lords is in the gutter—the House of Commons on its legs—the matter is to be compromised—the House of Commons is not to help up the House of Lords, but to lie down by its side! Fate takes from us the leader of the liberals in one house;—to supply the place, his majesty gives us the leader of the Tories *in the other!* Prophetic exchange! We are not to make our lords reformers, but our representatives cease to be so! Such is the royal experiment to prevent a collision. It is a very ingenious one; but his majesty has forgotten that Gatton and Lostwithiel are no more. In the next election this question is to be tried:—ARE THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND TO BE GOVERNED ACCORDING TO THE OPINION OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS, OR ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THEIR OWN REFORM? That is the point at issue. Twist, pervert, construe it as you will—raise whatever cries in favour of the church on one hand, or in abuse of the Whigs on the other, the question for the electors is,—will they or will they not choose a House of Commons that shall pass the same votes as the Lords, and that shall not pass votes which the Lords would reject? After having abolished the Gattons, will they make their whole house a Gatton?

Supposing then the king, from such evident reasons, to have resolved to get rid of his ministers at the first opportunity,*—suddenly Lord Spencer dies, and the

* And the Standard (Nov. 20th), the now official organ (and certainly an abler or a more eloquent the ministers could not have), frankly allows that the king has long been dissatisfied with the government—and even suggests the causes of that displeasure.

opportunity is afforded. There might have been a better one. Throughout the whole history of England, since the principles of a constitutional government and of a responsible administration were established, in 1688, there is no parallel to the combination of circumstances attendant upon the present change. A parallel to a part of the case there may be, to the whole case there is none. The cabinet assure the king of their power and willingness to carry on the government; the House of Commons, but recently elected, supports that cabinet by the most decided majorities; the premier, not forced on the king by a party, but *solicited by himself* to accept office; a time of profound repose; no resignation tendered, no defeat incurred—the revenue increasing—quiet at home—peace abroad; the political atmosphere perfectly serene:—when lo, there dies a very old man, whose death every one has been long foreseeing—not a minister, but the father of a minister, which removes, not the premier, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer, from the House of Commons to the House of Lords! An event so long anticipated does not confound the cabinet. The premier is not aghast, he cannot be taken by surprise by an event so natural and so anticipated (for very old men *will* die!) he is provided with names to fill up the vacant posts of Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons. He both feels and declares himself equally strong as ever:

"Lord Grey's administration," it says, "was at first perfect—(indeed! that is the first time we have heard the concession from such a quarter)—or, if altered, altered only for the better, by its purification from the *to-all-intolerable!* Earl of Durham." But this halcyon state soon ceases, because liberal measures creep in; and chief among the causes of the king's dislike to his ministers, and therefore to the Commons, is, first, the Irish Church bill, which the reader will remember was rejected by the House of Lords—*the bill*, not the *rejection of it*—is mightily displeasing to the king; and secondly, that change in the Irish Coercion bill which allowed his majesty's Irish subjects a jury, instead of a court-martial. This is termed by the Standard—"the Coercion bill mangled into a mere mockery." We may see what sort of mangling we are likely to have.

he submits his new appointments to his majesty. Let me imagine the reply. The king, we are informed by the now ministerial organs, expresses the utmost satisfaction at Lord Melbourne and his government: he considers him the most honourable of men, and among the wisest of statesmen. Addressing him, then, after this fashion—

> "He does not affect to dissemble his love,
> And *therefore* he kicks him down stairs."

"My lord, you are an excellent man—very. But old Lord Spencer—he was a man seventy-six years old: no one could suppose that, at that age, an earl would die! You are an admirable minister, I am pleased with your measures; but old Lord Spencer is no more. It is a sudden, an unforeseen event. Who could imagine he would only live to seventy-six? The revenue is prospering, the cabinet is strong, our allies are faithful; you have the House of Commons at your back; but, alas! Lord Spencer is dead! You cannot doubt my attachment to reform, but of course it depended on the life of Lord Spencer. You have lost a Chancellor of the Exchequer. You say you can supply his place; but who can supply the place of the late Lord Spencer? You have lost a leader of the House of Commons; you have found another on whom you can depend; but, my lord, where shall we find another Earl Spencer, so aged and so important as the earl who is gone? The life of the government, you are perfectly aware, was an annuity on the life of this unfortunate nobleman—he was only seventy-six! My love of liberal men and liberal measures is exceeding, and it was bound by the strongest tie—the life of the late Lord Spencer. How can my people want reform, now Lord Spencer is dead? How can I support reforming ministers, when Lord Spencer has ceased to be? The Duke of Wellington, you must be perfectly aware, is the only man to govern

the country, which has just lost the owner of so fine a library and so large an estate. It is true that his grace could not govern it before, but then Lord Spencer was in the way! The untimely decease of that nobleman has altered the whole face of affairs. The people were not quite contented with the Whigs, because they did not go far enough; but then—Lord Spencer was alive! The people now will be satisfied with the Tories, because they do not go so far, for—Lord Spencer is dead! A Tory ministry is necessary; it cannot get on without a Tory parliament; and a Tory parliament cannot be chosen without a Tory people. But ministry, parliament, and people, what can they be but Tory, after so awful a dispensation of Providence as the death of the Earl of Spencer? My lord, excuse my tears, and do me the favour to take this letter to the Duke of Wellington."

Well, but it may be said, that it was not the death of this good old man that so affected the king's arrangements; it was the removal of Lord Althorp from the Commons. "What, is not that cause enough?" cry the Tories. About as much cause as the one just assigned. "What, did not Lord Melbourne himself say, at the retirement of Lord Grey, that the return of Lord Althorp was indispensably necessary to his taking office?" Very possibly. But there is this little difference between the two cases: in the one, Lord Melbourne said, he could *not* carry on the government without Lord Althorp as leader of the Commons; and in the other, he assured the king that he *could*. The *circumstances* at the time which broke up Lord Grey's government, were such as raised the usual importance of Lord Althorp to a degree which every one saw must subside with the circumstances themselves. In the first place, it was understood, that Lord Althorp left the government rather than pass an unpopular clause in the Coercion bill, the passing of which certain circumstances rendered doubly distasteful to his mind; that

this led to the resignation of Earl Grey, and that Lord Althorp felt a natural and generous scruple in resuming office after that resignation. The members of the House of Commons came to their memorable requisition, because they looked upon Lord Althorp's resignation as the consequence of his popular sentiments. They feared the vacancy he created could be filled only by a man of less liberal opinions, and they felt his return, in such circumstances, would be for the popular triumph, as his secession might be but a signal for a change of policy. Such were the circumstances under which Lord Melbourne, at *that time*, considered Lord Althorp's return to the leadership of the Commons as necessary to the stability of the government. But what circumstances in the late changes are analogous to these? Is Lord Althorp now removed from office by popular sentiments, rendering his return necessary for the triumph of his sentiments—not the use of hs talents? Is the cabinet broken up? Is the House of Commons declaring, that not even death shall tear it from its beloved leader? What absurdity, to follow out the parallel! Lord Althorp was called by the death of his venerable father to the House of Lords. His loss created no alarm for an alteration in our policy, broke up no cabinet, and disturbed no measures; the prime minister was perfectly resigned to the event, and perfectly prepared with his successor—a successor of the same principles, and if of less conciliatory manners, of equal experience, more comprehensive knowledge, and greater eloquence.* The king has a right to exercise his prerogative—no one disputes it. It is only a misfortune that other ministers have not also fathers of

* In the best informed political circles it is understood, that Lord John Russell would have led the House of Commons and had the conduct of the Irish Church bill. Mr. Abercrombie would have taken charge of the Municipal Reform. Names that on these questions in particular would have shown that the government were in earnest in their measures.

seventy-six! Old Sir Robert, good Lord Mornington—would that *they* were alive!

And having now to all plain men shown how utterly burlesque is the whole pretext of the dismissal, and the whole parallel between Lord Althorp's former retirement and present elevation, let us turn again from the reason of the change to the change itself.

There are some persons simple enough to imagine that, though the Tory government may imply Tory men, it does not imply Tory measures; that the Duke of Wellington, having changed his sentiments (no, not his sentiments—his actions) on the Catholic question, will change them again upon matters like—the reform of the Protestant Church, the abuses of corporations, perhaps even triennial parliaments, and the purgation of the pension list! There are men, calling themselves reformers, and blaming the Whigs as too moderate in reforms, not only vain enough to hope this, but candid enough to say that a government thus changing, no matter with what open and shameless profligacy, no matter with what insatiate lust of power, purchased by what unparalleled apostacy—that a government, thus changing, and therefore thus unprincipled, ought to receive the support of the people! They would give their suffrage to the Duke of Wellington upon the very plea that he will desert his opinions; and declare that they will support him as a minister, if they can but be permitted to loathe him as an apostate.

My lord, I think differently on this point. Even were I able to persuade myself that the new Tory government would rival or outbid the Whigs in popular measures, I would not support it. I might vote for their measures, but I would still attempt to remove the men. What! is there nothing at which an honest and a generous people should revolt, in the spectacle of ministers suddenly turned traitors by the bribe of office—in the juggling by which men, opposing all measures of

reform when out of place, will, the very next month, carry those measures if place depends upon it? Would there be no evil in this to the morality of the people? Would there be no poison in this to the stream of public opinion? Would it be no national misfortune—no shock to order itself (so much of which depends on confidence in its administrators), to witness what sickening tergiversation, what indelible infamy, the vilest motives of place and power could inflict on the characters of public men? And to see the still more lamentable spectacle of a parliament and a press vindicating the infamy, and applauding the tergiversator! Vain, for these new-light converts, would be the cant excuses of "practical statesmen attending to the spirit of the age"—"conforming to the wants of the time"—"yielding their theories to the power of the people;" *for these are the very excuses of which they have denied the validity!* If this argument be good for them in office, why did they deny, and scorn, and trample upon it out of office? Far more strong and cogent was it when they had only to withdraw opposition to measures their theories disapproved, than when they themselves are spontaneously to frame those measures, administer them, and carry through. There could be but one interpretation to their change—one argument in their defence, and that is, that they would not yield to reforms when nothing was to be got by it; but that they would enforce reforms when they were paid for it—that they would not part with the birthright without the pottage, nor play the Judas without the fee! I do not think so meanly of the high heart of England as to suppose that it would approve even of good measures from motives so shamelessly corrupt. And, for my own part, solemnly as I consider a thorough redress of her "monster grievance" necessary for the peace of Ireland, a reform of our own church, and our own corporations, and a thorough carrying out and consummation of the princi-

ples of our reform, desirable for the security and prosperity of England, I should consider these blessings purchased at too extravagant a rate, if the price were the degradation of public men, and the undying contempt for consistency, faith, and honour—for all that makes power sacred, and dignity of moral weight, which such an apostacy would evince. Never was liberty permanently served by the sacrifice of honesty.

But this supposition, though industriously put forward by some politicians unacquainted with what is best in our English nature, is, I think, utterly groundless. I do not attribute to the Duke of Wellington himself too rigid a political honesty. He, who after having stigmatized one day the Reform bill, could undertake to carry it the next, may be supposed to have a mind which, however locked and barred, the keys of state can open to conviction. But let it be remembered, that his grace stood then almost alone. All that was high and virtuous of his party refused to assist in his astonishing enterprise. From Sir Robert Peel to Sir Robert Inglis—from the moderate to the ultra-Tory—every man who had tasted the sweets of character recoiled from so gross a contamination. His three days' government fell at once. Now he is wiser—doubtless he has *formed* a government—doubtless he has contrived to embrace in it the men who refused before. I believe, for the honour of my countrymen, that they have not receded from their principles now, any more than they receded then. And those principles are anti-reforming.

This is, then, their dilemma: either they will prosecute reform, or they will withhold it—either they will adhere to their former votes, or they will reverse them: in the one case, then, people of England, you will have uncompromising anti-reformers at your head—in the other, you will have ambitious and grasping traitors. Let them extricate themselves from this dilemma if they can!*

But, in fact, they have not this option. They are committed in every way to their old principles; they are committed, first, to their own party, and secondly, to the king. Were they as liberal as the Whigs, their friends would desert them; perhaps his majesty would dismiss them. Their friends are the High Church party. High Church is the war-cry they raise—High Church the motto of their banner. What is the High Church party? It is the party that is sworn to the abuses of the church. Its members are pledged, body and soul, to the bishops, and the deans, and the prebends, and the universities, and the Orangemen of Ireland. They may give out that they think a great church reform is necessary: vague expression! what is great to their eyes would be invisible to ours. Will they—let us come to the point, and I will single out one instance—will they curtail the Protestant establishment of Catholic Ireland? They have called the attempt "spoliation;" will they turn "spoliators?"—if so, they lose their friends, for no man supposes that the Tory churchmen have a chymical affinity to the Duke of Wellington—they have no affinity but that of interest: if he offend their interests, he offends the party. Let him but say, "That church has no congregation, but it gives 1500*l.* a year to the parson: I respect property—*the property of the people*—and they shall cease to pay, after the death of the incumbent, for receiving no benefit," and all the parsons of the country are in arms against him! What a moment to suppose that he could do justice in such a case! with the cheers of the Orangemen, and the ravings of Londonderry, and Roden, and Wicklow ringing in his ears!*

* See too the extracts from the duke's speeches appended to this letter. And while I am correcting these sheets (Friday, Nov. 21), in the report of the Conservative dinner in Kent, it is pleasing to find that the supporters of the Duke of Wellington are of opinion that the cause of THE GREAT SINECURE OF IRELAND is the cause of all England! Very true—but one is the plaintiff in the *cause*, the other the defendant.

As for the claims of the Dissenters, who can imagine they will be attended to by the man who has called them atheists? He may swallow his words, but can he swallow his friends of the colleges? He cannot lose his great permanent support, the church, for a temporary and hollow support which would forsake him the moment he had served its purpose.

The corporations—what hope of reform there? Every politician knows the corporations are the strongholds of Toryism, and many of the truest liberals supported the government till the corporation reform should be passed, in order to see safely carried a measure against Toryism only less important than the Reform bill. To reform the corporations will be to betray his own fortresses. Is the Duke of Wellington the man to do this?

But it is not to isolated measures that we are to look—the contest is not for this reform or the other—the two parties stand forth clear and distinct—they are no parties of names, but parties of opposite and irreconcilable interests. With the Duke of Wellington are incorporated those who have an interest in what belongs to an aristocratic, in opposition to a popular government; and he can concede nothing, or as little as possible, calculated to weaken the interests of his partisans. He is the incarnation of the House of Lords in opposition to the voice of the House of Commons.

Were he then a reformer, the people would despise him, his friends would desert,* and we may add the possibility that the king would dismiss him.

His majesty, we are assured, has no personal dislike to the late premier: he lauds him as the most honourable of men—he blows up his government, and scatters chaplets over the ruin. It was not a dislike to his

* But he might suppose that the measure which lost a Tory would gain a liberal. Yes, for that measure only. The friend would be lost for ever, the enemy gained but for a night.

person, but to his principles, that ensured his dismissal. Perhaps, had that accomplished and able minister condescended "to palter in a double sense,"—to equivocate and dissemble—to explain his means, but to disguise his objects, he might still be in office. But it is known in the political world that he was an honest statesman—that whatever was his last conference with the king, he did not disguise in *former interviews* that reform must be an act as well as a name—that a government to be strong must be strong in public gratitude and confidence—and perhaps, with respect to the particular reform of the Irish church, he may have delicately remarked, that the late commission sanctioned by the king was not to amuse but to satisfy the people—that if its report furnished a list of sinecure livings, there would be no satisfaction in wondering at the number—that to ascertain the manner and amount of abuses is only the prelude to their redress. This is reported of Lord Melbourne. I believe it, though not a syllable about any reform might have been introduced at the exact period of his removal. These, then, were the sentiments that displeased his majesty, and to these sentiments he preferred the Duke of Wellington. He chose these new ministers because they would do less than his late ones. He can only give them his countenance so long as they fulfil his expectations.

I pass over as altogether frivolous and absurd the tittletattle of the day, as to whether the king was or was not displeased with the speeches of Lord Brougham. Displeasure at those speeches could scarcely have had *much* to do with his majesty's resolve, or he would have sent, not for the Duke of Wellington, but the Earl of Durham! I pass over with equal indifference the gossip that attacks the family of his majesty. I know enough of courts to be sensible that we, who do not belong to them, are rarely well informed as to the influences which prevail in that charmed orbit; and I am

sufficiently imbued with the chivalry of an honest man not to charge women with errors of which they are probably innocent, and of the consequences of which they are almost invariably unaware. I can even conceive that were it true that his majesty's royal consort, or the female part of his family, were able to exercise an influence over state affairs, they would be actuated by the most affectionate regard for his interests and his dignity. The views of women are necessarily confined to a narrow circle; their public opinion is not that of a wide and remote multitude. They are attracted, even in humble stations, by the "solemn plausibilities" of life —they feel an anxious interest for those connected with them, which often renders their judgment too morbidly jealous of the smallest apparent diminution of their splendour or their power. To imagine that the more firmly a monarch adheres to his prerogatives the more he secures his throne, is a mistake natural to their sex. If such of them as may be supposed to advise his majesty did form and did act on such a belief, to my mind it would be a natural, and even an excusable error. Neither, while I lament the resolution of the king, am I blind to the circumstances of his situation. Called to the throne in times of singular difficulty—the advisers of his predecessor, whose reign had been peaceful and brilliant, on one side, a people dissatisfied with half reforms on the other—educated to consider the House of Lords at least as worthy of deference as the popular will—disappointed at finding that one concession, however great, could not content a people who demanded it, but as the means to an end—turning to the most powerful organ of the press, and reading that his liberal ministers were unpopular, and that the country cared not *who* composed its government—seeing before him but two parties besides the government party—the one headed by the idol of that people he began to fear, and the other by the most illustrious supporter of an order of

things which in *past times* was the most favourable to monarchy—I cannot deem it altogether as much a miracle as a misfortune that he should be induced to make the experiment he has risked. But I do feel indignation at those—not women, but men—grayhaired and practical politicians, who must have been aware, if not of its utter futility, of its pregnant danger; by whose assistance the king now adventures no holyday experiment. For a poor vengeance, or a worse ambition, they are hazarding the monarchy itself: by playing the knave they unguard the king. "There are some men," says Bacon, "who are such great self-lovers, that they will burn down their neighbour's house to roast their own eggs in the embers." In the present instance their neighbour's house may be a palace! For this is the danger—not (if the people be true to themselves) that the Duke of Wellington will crush liberty, but that the distrust of the royal wisdom in the late events—the feeling of insecurity it produces—the abrupt exercise of one man's prerogative to change the whole face of our policy, domestic, foreign, and colonial, without any assigned reason greater than the demise of old Lord Spencer—the indignation for the aristocracy, if the duke should head it against reform—the contempt for the aristocracy if the duke should countermarch it *to* reform—the release of all extremes of more free opinions, on the return which must take place, sooner or later, of a liberal administration;—the danger is, lest these and similar causes should, in times when all institutions have lost the venerable moss of custom, and are regarded solely for their utility, induce a desire for stronger innovations than those *merely* of reform.

"Nothing," said a man who may be called the prophet of revolutions, "destroys a monarchy while the people trust the king. But persons and things are too easily confounded, and to lose faith in the representative of an institution, forebodes the decease of the institution itself."

Attached as I am by conviction to a monarchy for this country—an institution that I take the liberty humbly to say I have elsewhere vindicated, with more effect, perhaps, as coming from one known to embrace the cause of the people, than the more vehement declamations of slaves and courtiers—I view such a prospect with alarm. And not the less so, because order is of more value than the institutions which are but formed to guard it; and in the artificial and complicated affairs of this country, a struggle against monarchy would cost the tranquillity of a generation.

We are standing on a present, surrounded by fearful warnings from the past. The dismissal of a ministry too liberal for a king, too little liberal for the people, is to be found a common event in the stormiest pages of human history. It is like the parting with a common mediator, and leaves the two extremes to their own battle.

And now, my lord, before I speak of what ought to be, and I am convinced will be, the conduct of the people, who are about to be made the judge of the question at issue, let me say a few words upon the cabinet that is no more. I am not writing a panegyric on the Whigs—I leave that to men who wore their uniform and owned their leaders. I have never done so. In the palmiest days of their power, I stooped not the knee to them. By vote, pen, and speech, I have humbly but honestly asserted my own independence; and I had my reward in the sarcasms and the depreciation of that party which seemed likely for the next quarter of a century to be the sole dispensers of the ordinary prizes of ambition. No matter. I wanted not their favours, and could console myself for the thousand little obstacles, by which a powerful party can obstruct the parliamentary progress of one who will not adopt their errors. I do not write the panegyric of the Whigs; and though I am not one of those who can be louder in vituperation when the power is over, than in warning before the of-

fence is done, I have not, I own, the misplaced generosity to laud now the errors which I have always lamented. It cannot be denied, my lord, or at least *I* cannot deny it, that the Whig government disappointed the people. And by the Whig government I refer to that of my Lord Grey. Not so much because it did not go far enough, as with some ill-judged partisans is contended, but rather because it went too far. It went too far, my lord, when its first act was to place Sir Charles Sutton in the speaker's chair,—it went too far when it passed the Coercion bill—it went too far when it defended sinecures—it went too far when it marched its army to protect the pension list.—It might have denied many popular changes—if it had not defended and enforced unpopular measures.—It could not do all that the people expected, but where was the necessity of doing what the people never dreamed of? Some might have regretted when it was solely Whig—but how many were disgusted when it seemed three parts Tory! Nor was this all—much that it did was badly done: there was a want of practical knowledge in the principle and the details of many of its measures—it often blundered and it often bungled. But these were the faults of a *past* cabinet. The cabinet of Lord Melbourne had *not been* tried. There was a vast difference between the two administrations, and that difference was this—in the one the more liberal party was *the minority*, in the other it was *the majority*. In the cabinet of the late premier, the weight of Sir John Hobhouse, Lord Duncannon, and the Earl of Mulgrave, was added to the scale of the people. There was in the cabinet just dissolved a majority of men whose very reputation was the popular voice, whose names were as wormwood to the Tories, and to whom it is amusing to contrast the language applied by the Tory journals with that which greeted "in liquid lines mellifluously bland," the lukewarm reformers they supplanted. Lord Melbourne's

cabinet had not been tried—*It is tried now*—THE KING HAS DISMISSED IT IN FAVOUR OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON! His majesty took the earliest opportunity and the faintest pretext in the royal power to prove that he thought it more liberal than the cabinet which preceded it. If some cry out with the Tories—"Nay, what said Lord Brougham at the Edinburgh dinner?" the answer is obvious. Even giving the most unfavourable construction to that memorable and much-canvassed speech, it is enough to remind the people that Lord Brougham, though a great orator, and a great man, able to play many parts, cannot fill up the whole *rôles* of the cabinet. Three other cabinet ministers were present, Sir John Hobhouse, Mr. Ellice, Mr. Abercromby. Have at least *their* sentiments been misconstrued? and were not those sentiments loud in sympathy with the opinions of Lord Durham. Did not they too lament every hour that passed over "recognised and unreformed abuses?" Suppose what we will of the sentiments of the ex-chancellor, three of his colleagues before his very face uttered only the sentiments which were those of the people when they elected a reformed parliament for the support of reforming ministers. *By these three speakers, then, at least, we can unequivocally judge of what the government would have done.* The majority of the cabinet were of the principles of these speakers. Had even Lord Brougham been an obstacle to those principles when they came to be discussed in the cabinet, Lord Brougham would have succumbed, and *not* the principles.*

* And now, in Lord Brougham's letter, we learn from himself that he was behind none of his colleagues in the support and preparation of reforms. In the former editions, the second paragraph now withdrawn from the text, was as follows;—"Of the conduct of that remarkable man it is not now necessary to speak; nor is it by these hasty lines, nor perhaps by so unable a hand, that so intricate a character can be accurately and profoundly analyzed. When the time comes that *may* restore him to office, it will be the fitting season for shrewder judges of character than I am, to speak firmly and boldly of his merits or his faults. At present, it is no slight blame to one so

With Lord Melbourne it was my lot in early youth to be brought in contact, and, though our acquaintance has now altogether ceased (for I am not one who seeks to refresh the memories of men in proportion as they become great), I still retain a lively impression of his profundity as a scholar—of his enthusiasm at generous sentiments—and of that happy frame of mind he so peculiarly possesses, and of which the stuff of statesmen is best made, at once practical and philosophical, large enough to conceive principles,—close enough to bring them into effect.* Could we disentangle and remove ourselves from the present, could we fancy ourselves in a future age, it might possibly be thus that an historian would describe him:—"Few persons could have been selected by a king as prime minister, in those days of violent party and of constant change, who were more fitted by nature and circumstances to act *with* the people, but *for* the king. A politician probably less ardent than sagacious, he was exactly the man to conform to the genius of a particular time;—to know how far to go with prudence—where to stop with success; not vehement in temper, nor inordinate in ambition, he was not likely to be hurried away by private objects, affections, or resentments. To the moment of his elevation as premier, it can scarcely be said of his political life that it affords one example of imprudence. '*Not to commit himself*,' was at one time supposed to be his particular distinction. His philosophy was less that which deals with abstract doctrines than that which teaches how to command shifting and various circumstances.

long in public life—so eminent and so active—to say that his friends consider him a riddle; if he be misconstrued, whose fault is it but his own? When the Delphic oracle could be interpreted two ways, what wonder that the world grew at last to consider it a cheat!"

* I imagined him susceptible only to the charge of indolence, and I once imputed to him that fault. On learning from those who can best judge, that in office at least the imputation was unjust, I took, long since, the opportunity of a new edition to efface it from the work in which the imputation was made.

He seldom preceded his time, and never stopped short of it. Add to this, that with a searching knowledge of mankind, he may have sought to lead, but never to deceive them. His was the high English statesmanship which had not recourse to wiles or artifice. He was one whom a king might have trusted, for he was not prone to deceive himself, and he would not deceive another. His judgment wary—his honour impregnable. Such was the minister who, if not altogether that which the people would have selected, seems precisely that which a king should have studied to preserve. He would not have led, as by a more bold and vigorous genius, Lord Durham, equally able, equally honest, with perhaps a yet deeper philosophy, the result of a more masculine and homely knowledge of mankind, and a more prophetic vision of the spirit of the age, might have done; he would not have *led* the people to good government, but he would have marched with them side by side."

Such, I believe, will be the outline of the character Lord Melbourne will bequeath to a calmer and more remote time. And this is not my belief alone. I observe that most of those independent members who had been gradually detached from the cabinet of Lord Grey, looked with hope and friendly dispositions to that of his successor. In most of the recent public meetings and public dinners where the former cabinet was freely blamed, there was a willingness to trust the latter one. And even those who would have wreaked on the government their suspicions of the chancellor, were deterred by Lord Durham's honest eulogium on the premier. This much then we must concede to the Melbourne administration. First, it went a step beyond Lord Grey's, it embraced the *preponderating*, instead of the *lesser*, number of men of the more vigorous and liberal policy. The faults of Lord Grey's government are not fairly chargeable upon it. Men of the independent party hoped more from it.

Secondly, by what we know, it seems to have been in earnest as to its measures, for we know this, that the Corporation Reform was in preparation—that the Commission into the Irish Church had produced reports that were to be fairly acted upon—that a great measure of justice to Ireland was to be based upon the undeniable evidence which that Commission afforded of her wrongs. We know this,—and knowing no more, we see the cabinet dissolved,—presumption in its favour, since we have seen its successor!

But, my lord, if we may speak thus in favour of that cabinet which your abilities adorned, and in hope of the services which it would have rendered us, we must not forget that we are about, in the approaching election, to have, not the *expectation* of good government, but the *power* of securing it. We must demand from the candidates who are disposed to befriend and restore you, not vague assurances of support to one set of men or the other, to the principles of Lord Grey or those of Lord Melbourne, but to the principles of the people. Your friends must speak out, and boldly—they must place a wide distinction, by candid and explicit declarations, between themselves and their Tory antagonists. Sir Edward Sugden said at Cambridge that he was disposed to reform temperately all abuses. The Emperor of Russia would say the same. Your partisans must specify *what* abuses they will reform, and to *what extent* they will go. The people must see, on the one hand, defined reform, in order to despise indefinite reformers on the other. Let your friends come forward manfully and boldly as befits honest men in stirring times, and the same people who gave the last majority to Lord Grey, will give an equal support to a cabinet yet more liberal, *and dismissed only because it was felt to be in earnest.* I know what the conduct of all who are temperate and honest among reformers ought to be. It is the cry of those who have compromised themselves with their con-

stituents in their too implicit adherence to the measures of Lord Grey, that "All differences must cease—Whig and Radical must forget their small dissensions—all must unite against a common enemy." A convenient cry for them; they are willing now to confound themselves with us, to take shelter under our popularity!—For *we*, my lord—and let this be a lesson to the next parliament—*we* are safe. Of us who have not subscribed implicitly to Lord Grey's government—of us who have been *more liberal* than that government—of us who have not defended its errors, nor, what was worse, defended the errors of its Tory predecessors,—I do not believe that a *single member* will lose his seat! The day of election will be to us a day of triumph. We have not enjoyed the emoluments and honours of a victorious party—we have not basked in the ministerial smiles—we have been depreciated by lame humour, as foolish and unthinking men, and stigmatized by a lamer calumny as revolutionary Destructives. But we had our consolation—we have found it in our consistency and our conscience—in our own self-acquittal, and in the increased esteem of our constituents. And now they need our help! Shall they have it? I trust, yes!* I trust, and I feel assured, that we shall forget minor differences, when we have great and ineffaceable distinctions to encounter. I trust that we shall show we are sensible we have it now in our power to prove that we fought for no selfish cause—that we were not thinking of honours and office for ourselves—that we shall show we wished to make our *principles*, not our *interests*, triumphant;—willing that others should be the agents for carrying them

* The third paragraph now withdrawn runs thus:—"We can forgive jests at our expense, for nobody applauded them, and they were not echoed, my lord, by the majority of the cabinet. One man might disavow us—one man might not enter our house nor travel by our coach (it is not *we* who have now pulled down the house, or upset the conveyançe!) but three of his colleagues asserted our principles, and we felt that there spoke the preponderating voice of the ministry."

into effect. This should be our sentiment, and this our revenge. All men who care for liberty should unite—all private animosities, all partial jealousies, should be merged. We should remember only that some of us have advocated good measures more than others; but that, the friends of the new ministry have opposed all. Haroun Alraschid, the caliph of immortal memory, went out one night disguised, as was his wont, and attended by his favourite Giaffer;—they pretended to be merchants in distress, and asked charity. The next morning two candidates for a place in the customs appeared before the divan. The sultan gave the preference to one of them. "Sire," whispered Giaffer, "don't you recollect that that man only gave us a piece of silver when we asked for a piece of gold?"—"And don't you recollect," answered Haroun, "that the other man, when we asked for a piece of silver, called for a cudgel?"

Looking temperately back at the proceedings of the Whigs, we must confess that they have greater excuses, than at the time we were aware of. "Who shall read," says the proverb, "the inscrutable heart of kings?" We could not tell how far the monarch was with us: rumours and suspicions were afloat—but we were unwilling to believe them of William the Reformer. We imagined his majesty, induced by secret and invisible advisers, might indeed be timid and reluctant; but we imagined, also, that the government, by firmness, might bias the royal judgment to a consistent and uniformly paternal policy. Many of us (though, for my own part, I foresaw and foretold* that the Tory party, so far from being crushed, were but biding their time, scotched not killed)—many of us supposed the Tories more humbled and more out of the reach of office, than the cabinet, with a more prophetic vision, must have felt they were. With a House of Lords, which the ministers had neither the power to command nor to reform—with a king,

* England and the English.

whose secret, and it may be stubborn inclinations, are now apparent,—surrounded by intrigues and cabals, and sensible that the alternative of a Tory government was not so impossible as the public believed, we must, in common candour, make many excuses for men, who, however inclined to the people, had also every natural desire to preserve the balance of the constitution—to maintain the second chamber, and to pay to the wishes of the king that deference, which, as the third voice of the legislature, his majesty is entitled to receive. Add to this, if they resigned office, the king would have had the excuse he has not now: he would have had *no alternative* but a Tory cabinet! It is true, however, that, so beset with difficulties, their wisest course would have been to remember the end and origin of all government—have thrown themselves on the people and abided the consequences—and that, my lord, is exactly what I believe your colleagues and yourself intended to do, and it is for that reason you are dismissed. A few months will show, a few months will allow you to explain yourselves; but I should not address to your lordship this letter—I should not commit myself to a vain prophecy—I should not voluntarily incur your own contempt for my simplicity, if I had not the fullest reason to believe, that the occasion is only wanting to acquit yourselves to the public.

Considering these circumstances with candour—the situation of the last ministry—the dissolution of the present, and the reasons for that dissolution; considering also the first enthusiasm of the Reform bill, which induced so many members, with the purest motives, to place confidence in the men who had obtained it;—we shall find now excuses for much of whatever temporizing we may yet desire for the future to prevent: and to prevent it must be our object at the next election.

On all such members of the Whig majority as will declare for the future for a more energetic and decided

conduct, so as to lead the government through counteracting obstacles, and both encourage, if willing, and force it, if hesitating, to a straightforward and uncompromising policy, the electors cannot but look with indulgence. Such candidates have only to own on their part, that any dallying with "recognised abuse" has been the result, not of inclination, but of circumstance, and the difficulties of circumstance will be at once remembered. For those who will not make this avowal, whatever their name, they are but Tories at heart, and as such they must be considered. This is what the late cabinet itself, if I have construed it rightly, must desire; and if we act thus, with union and with firmness, with charity to others, but with justice to our principles, we shall return to the next parliament a vast majority of men who will secure the establishment of a government that no intrigue can undermine, no oligarchy supplant; based upon a broad union of all reformers, and entitled to the gratitude of the people, not by perpetually reminding it of one obligation, but by constantly feeding it with new ones. Of such a cabinet I know that you, my lord, will be one; and I believe that you will find yourself, not perhaps among *all*, but among *many* of your old companions, and no longer without the services of one man in particular, whose name is the synonyme of the people's confidence. Taught by experience,* there must then be no compromise with foes—no Whig organ holding out baits of office to Sir Robert Peel—no crowding popular offices with Tory malecontents—no

* And we have the assurance from one of the organs of the late ministers, in an article admirable for its temper and its tenets, that this lesson is already taught. "The leaders of the liberal party must have at last learned the utter futility of every attempt to conciliate the supporters of existing abuses—they must now know that secret enmity is ever watching the occasion of wounding them unawares, and *that the public men who would contend against it can only maintain themselves by exhibiting a frank and full reliance on the popular support, and meriting it by an unflinching assertion of popular principles*"—*Globe, Nov.* 17.

ceding to an anti-national interest, however venerable its name—no clipping to please the Lords—no refusing to unfurl the sail when the wind is fair, unless Mrs. Partington will promise not to mop up the ocean!

At present we are without a government; we have only a dictator. His grace the Duke of Wellington outbids my Lord Brougham in versatility. He stands alone, the representative of all the offices of this great empire. India is in one pocket, our colonies in the other*—see him now at the Home Office, and now at the Horse Guards; Law, State, and Army, each at his command.—Jack of all trades, and master of none—but that of war;—we ask for a cabinet, and see but a soldier.

Meanwhile, eager and panting, flies the courier to Sir Robert Peel!—grave Sir Robert! How well we can picture his prudent face!—with what solemn swiftness will he obey the call! how demurely various must be his meditations!—how ruffled his stately motions at the night-and-day celerity of his homeward progress! Can this be the slow Sir Robert? No! I beg pardon; *he* is not to discompose himself. I see, by the papers, that it is only the courier that is to go at "minute speed"—the neophyte of Reform is to travel "by easy stages"—we must wait patiently his movements—God knows we shall want patience by-and-by;—his stages will be easy enough in the road the Times wishes him to travel!

The new political Hamlet!—how applicable the situation of his parallel!—how well can his Horatio, (Twiss), were he himself the courier, break forth with the exposition of the case—

. . . . "Fortinbras
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
Sharks up a list of *brainless* resolutes

* "His grace will superintend generally the affairs of the government, till the return of Sir Robert Peel." So says the Morning Post. But the Post is very angry if any one else says the same.

† Fontinbras, Anglicè "Strong Arm"—literally, "the duke."

For food and diet to some enterprise,
'That hath a stomach in't, *which is no other,*
As it doth well appear unto the state,
But to recover for us by strong hand,
And terms compulsatory, our—, offices.'
. . . . This, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this posthaste and romage in the land!"

[*Enter the Ghost of the old Tory Rule.*]
"'Tis here—'tis here—'tis gone!"

[*Now appears Hamlet himself, arms folded, brow thoughtful.—Sir Robert was always a solemn man!*]

[*Enter the same Ghost of Tory Ascendency, in the likeness of old Sir Robert.*]

"My father's spirit in arms!
. . . .
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee.
. . . . Tell,
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements."——

Whereat good Horatio wooingly observes—

"It beckons you to go away with it."

Our Hamlet is in doubt. The Tory sway was an excellent thing when alive, but to follow the ghost now, may lead to the devil; nevertheless, Horatio says, shrewdly,

"The very *place* puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain!"

The temptation is too great, poor Hamlet is decoyed, and the wise Marcellus (the Herries of the play), disinterestedly observes,

"Let's follow!"

Alas! we may well exclaim, then, with the soft Horatio,

"To what issue will this come?"

And reply with the sensible Marcellus, who sums up the whole affair.

"*Something is rotten in the state of Denmark!*"

We need not further pursue the parallel, though inviting, especially in that passage, where to be taken for

a rat is the prelude to destruction. Leave we Hamlet undisturbed to his soliloquy,

"To be, or not to be—that is the question."

And that question is unresolved. Will Sir Robert Peel commit himself *at last*—will he join the administration—will he, prudent and wary, set the hopes of his party, the reputation of his life, on the hazard of a die, thrown not for Whigs and Tories—but for Toryism, it is true, on the one hand, and a government far more energetic than Whiggism on the other, with all the chances attendant on the upset of the tables in the meanwhile? The game is not for the restoring, it is for the annihilation, of the *juste milieu!* If he join the gamesters, let him; we can give startling odds on the throw. But may he see distinctly his position! If he withdraw from this rash and ill-omened government, if he remain neutral, he holds the highest station in the eyes of the country, which one of his politics can ever hope to attain. It is true, that office may be out of his reach, but to men of a large and a generous ambition, there are higher dignities than those which office can bestow. He will stand A POWER IN HIMSELF—a man true to principle, impervious to temptation; he will vindicate nobly, not to this time only, but to posterity, his single change upon the Catholic Emancipation; he will prove that no sordid considerations influenced that decision. He will stand alone and aloft, with more than the practical sense, with all the moral weight of Chateaubriand—one whom all parties must honour, whose counsels must be respected by the most liberal, as by the most Tory cabinet. Great in his talents—greater in his position—greatest in his honour. But if he mix himself irrevocably with the insane and unprincipled politicians, who now seek either to deceive or subdue the people, he is lost for ever. That ministry have but this option, to refuse all reform and to brave the public, or to carry, in contempt of all honesty, measures at least as liberal as

those which he, as well as they, opposed when proceeding from the Whigs. Will he be mad enough to do the one—will he be base enough to do the other? Can he be a tyrant, or will he be a turncoat? His may be the ambition which moderate men have assigned to him—an ambition prudent and sincere:—His may be a name on which the posterity that reads of these eventful times, will look with approval and respect;—on the other hand, the alternative is not tempting—it is to be deemed the creature of office, and the dupe of the Duke of Wellington! Imagine his situation, rising to support either the measures which must be carried by the soldiers, or those which would have been proposed by the Whigs—bully or hypocrite;—what an alternative for one who can yet be (how few in this age may become the same!) A GREAT MAN! And this, too, mainly from one quality that he has hitherto carried to that degree in which it becomes genius. That quality is prudence! all his reputation depends on his never being indiscreet! He is in the situation of a prude of a certain age, who, precisely because she may be a saint, the world has a double delight in damning as a sinner. Sweet, tempted Innocence, beware the one false step! turn from the old duke! list not the old Lord Eldon! allow not his Grace of Cumberland (irresistible seducer!) to come too near! O Susanna, Susanna, what lechers these elders are!

But enough of speculation for the present on an uncertain event. We have now only to look to what is sure, and that is a new parliament.* They hint at

* Since writing the above, it seems to be a growing opinion among men of all parties, that if Sir Robert Peel join the ministers, they *will* meet parliament—for the sake of *mutual explanations!*—But the duke is a prompt man, and loves to take us by surprise—*we must be prepared!*

Addendum to Third Edition.—And now we have additional reason to be prepared, and to acknowledge how little to-morrow can depend on the reports of to-day.

"We owe it to our readers to acknowledge, that we have much

the policy of trying *this:* LET THEM! I think they would dissolve us the second day of our meeting!

And now, my lord, deviating from the usual forms of correspondence, permit me, instead of addressing your lordship, to turn for a few moments to our mutual friends —the electors of England.

I wish them, clearly and distinctly, to understand the grounds and the results of the contest we are about to try. I do not write these lines for the purpose of converting the conservatives—far from me so futile an attempt. What man of sense can *now* dream of the expediency of attempting to convert our foes? There is but one apostle capable of such a miracle, and its name is—*office!* I write only to that great multitude of men of all grades of property and rank, who returned to the reformed parliament its vast reforming majority. Thank God, that electoral body is *as yet* unaltered. Who knows, if it now neglect its duty, how long it may remain the same! I have before spoken, electors of England, of what seems to me likely to be your conduct. But let us enter into that speculation somewhat more minutely. There are some who tell us that you are indifferent to the late changes, and careless of the result,—who laugh at the word "crisis," and disown its application. Are you yourselves, then, thoroughly awakened to your position, to the mighty destinies at your command? I will not dwell at length upon the fearful anxiety with which your decision will be looked for in foreign nations; for we must confess,

less hope of a dissolution of parliament being dispensed with than we had on Saturday. The caballing of the metropolitan members, and a repetition of the kind of display made on Friday at Stroud, may render it impossible for any government, not prepared to sacrifice the king, to go on with the present House of Commons."—(*Standard*, Nov. 24.) Let other than the metropolitan members cabal! Let there be other displays than those at Stroud! We see the force attached to these demonstrations; we have no cause to fear a dissolution; the threat does not awe us; we would *not* sacrifice the king, and *therefore* we would rescue him from his advisers.

that, engrossed as we have lately been in domestic affairs, foreign nations have for us but a feeble and lukewarm interest. But we are still THE GREAT ENGLISH PEOPLE, the slightest change in whose constitutional policy vibrates from corner to corner of the civilized world. We are still that people, who have grown great, not by the extent of our possessions, not by the fertility of our soil, not by the wild ambition of our conquests; but, by the success of our commerce, and the preservation of our liberties. The influence of England has been that of a moral power, not derived from regal, or oligarchic, or aristocratic ascendency; but from the enterprise and character of her people. We are the Great Middle Class of Europe. When Napoleon called us a *bourgeoise* nation, in one sense of the word he was right. What the middle class is to us, that we are to the world!—a part of the body politic of civilization, remote alike from ochlocracy* and despotism, and drawing its dignity—its power—its very breath—from its freedom. The Duke of Wellington and his band are to be in office: for when we are met with the cry, "Perhaps the duke himself will not take office at all," what matters it to us whether he be before the stage or behind the scenes—whether he represent the borough *himself*, or appoint his *nominees*—the *votes* will be the same!—The duke and his band are to be in office! what to the last hour have been their foreign politics?—wherever tyranny the grossest was to be defended—wherever liberty the most moderate was to be assailed—*there* have they lent their aid! The King of Holland

* Ochlocracy, mob-rule; the proper antithesis to democracy, which (though perverted from its true signification) is people-rule. Tories are often great ochlocrats, as their favourite mode of election, in which mobs are bought with beer, can testify. Lord Chandos's celebrated clause in the Reform bill was ochlocratic. Ochlocracy is the plebeian partner of oligarchy, carrying on the business under another name. The extremes meet, or, as the eastern proverb informs us, when the serpent wants to seem innocent, *it puts it's tail in its mouth!*

trampling on his subjects was "our most ancient ally," whom "nothing but the worst revolutionary doctrines could induce us to desert." Charles X., vainly urging his ordinances against the parliament and the press at the point of the bayonet, was an "injured monarch," and the people "a rebellious mob." The despotism of Austria is an "admirable government"—with Russia it is "insolence" to interfere in behalf of Poland. Miguel himself, blackened by such crimes as the worst period of the Roman empire cannot equal, is eulogized as "the illustrious victim of foreign swords." Not the worst excesses that belong to despotism, from the bonds of the negro to the blood of a people, have been beneath the praises of your present government—not the most moderate resistance that belongs to liberty has escaped their stigma. This is no exaggeration; chapter and verse, their very speeches are before us, and out of their own mouths do we condemn them. Can we then be insensible, little as we may regard our more subtle relations with foreign states—can we be insensible to the links which bind us with our fellow-creatures; no matter in what region of the globe? Can we feel slightly the universal magnitude of the interests now resting on our resolves? Believe me, wherever the insolence of power is brooding on new restraints, wherever—some men ("in the chamber of dark thought"), are forging fetters for other countries or their own, *there* is indeed a thrill of delight at the accession of the Duke of Wellington! But wherever liberty struggles successfully, or suffers in vain—wherever opinion has raised its voice—wherever enlightenment is at war with darkness, and patience rising against abuse—there will be but one feeling of terror at these changes, and one feeling of anxious hope for the resolution which you, through whose votes speaks the voice of England, may form at this awful crisis. Shall this decision be unworthy of you?

If we pass from foreign nations to Ireland (which, unhappily, we have often considered as foreign to us), what can we expect from the Duke of Wellington's tender mercies? Recollect that there will be no peace for England while Ireland remains as it is. Cabinet after cabinet has been displaced, change after change has convulsed us, measures the most vital to England have been unavoidably postponed to discussion on bills for Ireland; night upon night, session upon session of precious time have been thrown away, because we have not done for Ireland what common sense would dictate to common justice. I have just returned from that country. I have seen matters with my own eyes. Having assuredly no sympathy with the question of Repeal, I have not sought the judgment of Repealers—of the two, I have rather solicited that of the Orangemen: for, knowing by what arguments misgovernment can be assailed, I was anxious to learn, in its strong-hold, by what arguments misgovernment can be defended. And I declare solemnly, that it seems to me the universal sentiment of all parties, that God does not look down upon any corner of the earth in which the people are more supremely wretched, or in which a kind, fostering, and paternal government is more indispensably needed. That people are Catholic. Hear what the Duke of Wellington deems necessary for them.

"The object of the government (for Ireland), after the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief bill, should have been to do all in their power to conciliate—whom? The Protestants! Every thing *had been granted to the Roman Catholics that they could require!*"—*The Duke of Wellington's Speech, Hansard*, p. 950, vol. xix. 3d Series. Every thing a people groaning under each species of exaction that ever took the name of religion can require! This statement may delight the Orangemen, but will it content Ireland? *that* is the question. As for the Orangemen themselves, with their Christian zeal,

and their Mahometan method of enforcing it;—with their—"here is our Koran," and "there is our sword," —they remind us only of that ingenious negro, to whom his master, detecting him in some offence, put the customary query—"What, sir, do you never make use of your Bible?"—"*Yes, massa, me trap my razor on it sometime!*" So, with these gentlemen, they seem to think that the only use of the Bible is to sharpen their steels upon it!

The story of the negro recalls us to the colonies: what effect will this change have upon the fate of the late slave population? By our last accounts, the managers, instead of co-operating with the local authorities, were rather *striving* to exasperate the negroes into conduct, which must produce a failure of that grand experiment of humanity.—The news arrives,—(*just before Christmas too*,—what a season!)—the managers see in office the very men, who not only opposed the experiment, but who prophesied the failure:—they know well, that if the failure occur, it is not *to them* that the new government will impute the blame—they know well that a prophet is rarely displeased with the misfortunes he foretells. Is there no danger in all this? And shall we be told that this is *no crisis?* that there is nothing critical in these changes—nothing to reverse or even to affect our relations with Ireland, the colonies, and the continent—nothing that we should lament, and nothing that we should fear?

And now, looking only to ourselves, is there nothing critical in the state of *England?*

You must remember that whatever parliament you elect *will have the right of remodelling that* parliament! The same legislative power that reformed can un-reform. If you give to the Duke of Wellington a majority in the House of Commons, you give him the whole power of this empire for six years. If a liberal House of Commons should ever go too far, you have a king and a

House of Lords to stop their progress. If a conservative House of Commons should go too far in the opposite, extreme, who will check its proceedings? You may talk of public opinion—you may talk of resistance—but when your *three* branches of the legislature are against you, with what effect could you resist? You might talk vehemently—could you act successfully;—when you were no longer supported by your representatives,—when to act would be to rebel? The law and the army would be both against you. How can you tell to what extent the one might be stretched or the other increased? Vainly then would you say, "In our next parliament we will be wiser;" in *your next* parliament the people might be no longer the electors! There cannot be a doubt but that, if the parliament summoned by the duke be inclined to support the duke, the provisions of the Reform bill will be changed. Slight alterations in the franchise—raising it where men are free, lowering it where men can be intimidated, making it different for towns and for agricultural districts, working out in detail the principles of Lord Chandos, may suffice to give you a constituency of slaves. This is no idle fear—the Reform Transformed will be the first play the new company will act, if you give them a stage—it is a piece they have got by heart! Over and over again have they said at their clubs, in public and in private, that the Reform bill ought to be altered.* They may now disa-

* And Lord Strangford seems to speak out pretty boldly at the Ashford dinner. "It was true that among the institutions of the country, there was something that *might* be amended and improved, but there was much more that required to be placed in its *pristine state of purity*. *That that would come to pass* he felt sure, when he saw so many around him thinking as he did." &c. Pristine state of purity! But what so pure as the rotten boroughs? What so pure as the old parliamentary system? And if the restoration of these immaculate blessings depends upon seeing "many around him who thought as he did," where will his lordship find those of that philosophy, except in the party now in power? It matters not *what* Lord Strangford meant should be restored to its pristine purity. He may say it was *not* the old parliamentary system. What was it then? Is there a

vow any such intention. Calling themselves reformers, they may swear to protect reform. But how can you believe them? "Abu Rafe is witness to the fact, but who *will be witness for Abu Rafe?*"* By their own confessions, if they call themselves reformers, they would be liars; if they are false in one thing, will they not be false in another? Are they to be trusted because they own they have been insincere? If we desire to know in what light even the most honourable Tories consider public promises, shall we forget *Sir George Murray and the dissenters?* Do not fancy they will not hazard an attempt on your liberties—they *will* hazard it, if you place the House of Commons in their hands. Whatever their fault, it is not that of a want of courage. You talk of public opinion—history tells us that public opinion can be kept down. It is the nature of slavery, that, as it creeps on, it accustoms men to its yoke. They may *feel*, but they are not willing always to *struggle*. Where was the iron-hearted public opinion, that confronted the first Charles, threw its shield round the person of Hampden, abolished the starchamber, and vindicated the rights of England, when, but a few years afterward, a less accomplished and a more unprincipled monarch, sent Sydney to the block—judges decided against law—parliament itself was suspended—and the tyrant of England was the pensioner of France? The *power* of public opinion woke afterward in the reign of James II., but from how shameful a slumber—and to what even greater perils than that of domestic tyranny, had we not been exposed in the interval? Nothing but the forbearance of the continent itself saved us from falling a prey to whatever

single thing which the Reformed parliament has altered that the people wish to see restored to "its pristine purity?" But then we are told that we are not to judge the duke by the language of his supporters. By what are we to judge of him then? Either by their language or his own: it is quite indifferent which. But perhaps Tory speeches are like witches' prayers, and are to be read backwards!

* Gibbon.

vigorous despot might have conceived the design. With the same angry, but impotent dejection, with which public opinion beheld the country spoiled of its parliament—its martyrs consigned to the block—its governors harlots, and its king a hireling—it saw, unavenged, the Dutch fleet riding up the Thames,—the war-ships of England burnt before the very eyes of her capital,—and "the nation," to quote even Hume's courtly words, "*though the king ever appeared but in sport* (*!*) exposed to the ruin and ignominy of a foreign conquest." Happily, Austria then was not as it is now—profound in policy, stern in purpose, indomitable in its hate to England; Russia was not looking abroad for conquests, aspiring to the Indian empire, and loathing the freemen who dare to interfere for Poland. We were saved, but not by your public opinion! You may boast of the nineteenth century, and say, such things cannot happen to-day; but the men of Cromwell's time boasted equally of the spirit of the seventeenth, and were equally confident that liberty was eternal. And even at this day have we not seen in France, how impotent is *mere* opinion? Have not the French lost all the fruits of their revolution? Are not the ordinances virtually carried? And why? Because the French parted with the power out of their own hands, under the idea that public opinion was a power sufficient in itself. When the man first persuaded the horse to try (*by way of experiment*) the saddle and bridle, what was his argument?—"My good friend, you are much stronger than I am; you can kick me off again if you don't like me—your will is quite enough to dislodge me;—come—the saddle—it is but a ride, recollect!—come, open your mouth—Lord have mercy, what fine teeth!—how you could bite if I displeased you. So, so, old boy!"—What's the moral? The man is riding the horse to this day!—Public opinion is but the expression of the prevalent power. The people have now the power, and public opinion is its voice; let them give

away the power, and what is opinion?—*vox* (indeed) *et prœterea nihil*—the voice and—nothing more!

It is madness itself in you, who have now the option of confirming or rejecting the Duke of Wellington's government, to hesitate in your choice. They tell you to try the men; have you not tried them before? Has not the work of reform been solely to undo what they have done? If your late governments could not proceed more vigorously, *who opposed them?*

> "Hark! in the lobby hear a lion roar;
> Say, Mr Speaker, shall we shut the door?
> Or, Mr. Speaker, shall we let him in,
> To—*try if we can turn him out again!*"

You may say, that among the multiplicity of candidates who present themselves, and among the multiplicity of their promises, you may be unable to decide who will be your friends, who not. You have one test that cannot fail you. Ask them if they will support the Duke of Wellington. If they say "Yes, if he reform," you will know that they will support him if he apostatizes. He who sees no dishonour in apostacy, waits but his price to apostatize himself. "Away," said Mr. Canning, long since—"Away with the cant of measures, *not men.* The idle supposition, that it is the *harness*, not the horses, that draw the chariot along."—"In times of difficulty and danger, it is to the energy and *character* of individuals, that a nation must be indebted for its salvation!"—the energy and character! Doubtless, the duke has at present energy and character! I grant it; but if he exert in *your* behalf the energy, will he keep the character? or, if he preserve his character, how will you like his energy?

Recollect that it is not for measures which you can foresee that caution is necessary, it is for measures that you *cannot* foresee; it is not for what the duke may profess to do, but for what he may dare to do, that you must not put yourselves under his command. Be not

led away by some vague promises of taking off this tax and lowering that. *The empire is not for sale!* We, who gave twenty millions to purchase freedom for the negro, are not to accept a bribe for the barter of our own. One tax too may be taken off, but others *may be put on!* They may talk to you of the first, but they will say nothing of the last! Malt is a good thing, but even malt may be bought too dear. Did not the Tories blame Lord Althorp for reducing taxation too much? Are they the men likely to empty the exchequer? To drop a shilling in the street was the old trick of those who wanted to pick your pockets! Remember that you are not fighting the battle between Whigs and Tories; if the Whigs return to office, they must be more than Whigs; you are now fighting for things, not men—*for the real consequences of your reform.* In your last election your gratitude made you fight too much for names; it was enough for your candidates to have served Lord Grey; you must now return those who will serve the people. If you are lukewarm, if you are indifferent, if you succumb, you will deserve the worst. But if you exert yourselves once more, with the same honesty, the same zeal, the same firm and enlightened virtue as two years ago ensured your triumph,—wherever, both now and henceforth, men honour faith, or sympathize with liberty, there will be those who will record your struggle, and rejoice in its success. These are no exaggerated phrases; you may or may not be insensible to the character of the time; you may or may not be indifferent to the changes that have taken place; but the next election, if parliament be dissolved by a Tory minister, will make itself a date in history, recording one of those ominous conjunctions in "the Old Almanac" by which we calculate the chronology of the human progress.

And, my lord, that the conduct and the victory of our countrymen will be, as they have been, the one firm and temperate, the other honourable and assured, I do, from

my soul, believe. Two years may abundantly suffice to wreck a government or convert a king; but scarcely to change a people!

I have the honour to be,

My lord,

With respect and consideration,

Your lordship's obedient servant,

E. LYTTON BULWER.

London, Nov. 21, 1834.

TORY CLAIMS ON POPULAR CONFIDENCE.

"Enough's as good as a feast."—*Proverb.*

As some of the journals are inclined to suppose that his grace the Duke of Wellington and the only party he commands will be disposed to grant reforms and can grant them with honour; as they have even specified the particular reforms of the Irish Church, the Corporation question, and even the admission of Dissenters to the University, it may be as well to ascertain, by the duke's own speeches and those of his friends, the grounds of their hypothesis The people shall at least know how large is the demand upon their confidence.

Dissenters, their claim to enter the University, and their character generally.

"Who and what were the Dissenters? Many of them differed but little, except in one or two points, from the Established Church; others of them did not agree with the Church of England in any respect; others denied the Trinity, and others were Atheists. Would it be desirable to place SUCH persons in a situation to inflict injury on the Established Church?"—*Speech of the Duke of Wellington, April 20.*

Again, *on the Dissenters' University Bill*—

"If ever that measure should be adopted by the House, which God forbid . . . ."—*Ibid.*

Irish Church Reliefs.

"The object of the government (for Ireland), after the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, should have been to do all in their power to conciliate—whom? The Protestants! Every thing *had been granted to the Roman Catholics that they could require!*"—*The Duke of Wellington's Speech, Hansard,* p. 950, vol. xix. 3d Series.

On the Irish Church Temporalities Bill.

"Utterly inconsistent with the policy of the country."

Irish Tithe Bill.

"If the government were so feeble and so irresolute, as to allow the law to be dormant (in collecting tithes), then it was no wonder the English Church should be sacrificed."—*Ibid. Aug.* 11.

"Well," says one journal, "but at least he will give us a Corporation Reform."—The following sentence looks like it, certainly.

Corporation Reform.

"He would make one observation, it was desirable emphatically to utter. He doubted, much doubted, whether it would be expedient

to establish a new municipal constitution on the ten-pound franchise. He considered such to be impracticable."

"At least, then," cry the agriculturists, "We shall be sure of the Malt-tax."—Stay a moment, Sir Robert Peel is to be consulted there.

Malt-Tax.

"With respect to the total repeal of the Malt-tax, he still adhered to the opinion he had stated in the last session—the House could not consent to such an excessive reduction of taxation as would be implied in the repeal of the Malt-tax."—*Feb.* 27.

Yet still sighs some lovesick waverer, "Public opinion is strong —there's the Pension List." Ay, Sir Robert Peel gives us great hopes there.

Pension List.

You are now going to dry up the sources of that power of bestowing rewards for service, which was once considered essential to the wellbeing of the state. *I challenge you to produce the instances in which there has been a corrupt appropriation of the Pension Fund.* I admit that pensions have been granted as acts of royal favour, without *reference* (mark what follows), to public service."—*Peel, May* 5.

So the Pension List is not only to be unexamined, but it is an admirable thing!—it is essential to the wellbeing of the state, that acts of royal favour should not have reference to public services. Well, the Whigs never went so far as that!

But, then, some who deal in comprehensive phrases, despising the drudgery of quoting *particular* acts in which the Tories intend to be liberal, say they intend to be liberal *generally*. Of their general liberality we can guess only from their general politics. But how far they love liberty and hate tyranny, we can see quite as well abroad as at home.

INSTANCES OF GENERAL LIBERALITY.

Negro Slavery.

"He had opposed the measure regarding the West India question from its commencement."—*The Duke of Wellington.*

Melancholy regrets for not loving Don Miguel.

"This state of things would not continue, if we were in amity with Don Miguel."

Sympathetic sigh from Lord Aberdeen, in assertion of Don Miguel's popularity.

"Nine tenths of the people of Portugal were favourable to Don Miguel."

Belgian Revolution.

"The king has conducted himself above all praise, and if it please, I trust his merits will meet with due success. In truth, the cause of Holland is so *just a cause*, so *good a cause*, that it must prosper; and when I say the cause of Holland, I entreat *your lordships to believe* that I mean *the cause of England also, for I consider them inseparable and identical.*"—*Lord Aberdeen. Hansard,* vol. ix. 3d Series.

Agreeable intelligence from one of our next cabinet—that the cause of the despotism of the King of Holland is inseparable and identical with the cause of England!

I pass over the calumnies lavished by themselves and their organs, on the three days of France—their resentment at the French people for not submitting to the suspension of the press, the loss of a constitution, and the bayonets of the soldiers—their admiration for the designs of Charles X.—their compassion for his fall. (Again you will recollect, that if the French had not reaped the due fruits of that revolution, their fault was a *misplaced confidence in false professions*, and too *sanguine a belief* in the *unalterable power of public opinion*.) I pass over their unmemorial declarations on every part of the Reform bill—their sneers at our shopkeepers, their scorn for our mechanics, their abhorrence of our ten-pound voters. In return, our shopkeepers, our mechanics, and our ten-pound voters, are requested to invest them with the government;—upon what grounds, for what principles, from what services, and with what hopes, we have seen already.

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